



Memoir of a survivor

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Order the latest in luxury

China has a ravenous appetite for up-to-date luxury wear. One Italian company is tapping into the demand with its new Web-direct catalog.



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Box of cinematic art

HBOX, the self-contained mini-cinema exhibit, is traveling the world to show off recent works by international film artists. This month it's in Beijing.

Music recalls red roots



Mark Levine, a 63-year-old American teacher at Minzu University of China, has been singing revolutionary songs for years – it was only natural that he would learn China's.

Levine is one of many expats who are embracing the "red" song revival. He said the surge in interest is due to foreigners' increasing attention to China – and their desire to be a part of its growth.

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Blind people denied use of their dogs

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Moms head for US soil instead of HK

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Office cafe a heaven for IT startups

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Golf course construction accelerates despite ban



Many new courses are being built with the permission of local governments.

IC Photo

By Xinji Letu

Despite a government moratorium on golf course construction, more than 400 new courses sprang up during the past seven years.

Eleven ministries and departments, including the National Development and Reform Committee and the Ministry of Land and Resources, began a campaign this week to audit and regulate the unapproved new courses.

The Golf Education and Research Center of Beijing Forestry University said there are 600 golf courses in China: there were 170 when the State Council banned their construction to combat land abuse and farm displacement.

However, the director of one new course, who would only speak on conditions of anonymity, said there are more than 700 golf courses in China.

"I don't think it is appropriate to say these new courses all are illegal. They were given permission to use the land by the local government and received valid business licenses," he said.

Current regulations on golf course construction are extremely ambiguous. There are no standard procedures or requirements for applying to build a new course, and developers are often encouraged by the local governments to build them on desolate land.

"These projects get an implicit go-ahead from local

authorities – even if they know they are banned by the central government," he said.

Yan Jinming, a professor of land management at Renmin University of China, said officials view golf course construction as a shortcut to boosting the local economy. "Many course projects are approved as 'sport parks' or 'city greenery,'" he said.

But Zhang Xin, another professor at Renmin University of China, said the exclusive nature of the courses disqualifies them for such classifications.

"If a developer harms the public interest, his contract with the local government is invalid," Zhang said.

Golf has grown popular with

the rise in incomes. Beijing alone has more than 70 golf courses, and the number of regular golfers increases by more than 10 percent annually.

In order to protect farmland and forests, the State Council is examining all courses, including those built before 2004 that failed to complete their application procedures or take necessary measures for environmental protection.

To better regulate the golf industry, Yan said the government should pass more specific land use application criteria and subject every project to a public hearing. That would be the only way to crack down on official misconduct, he said.

Divorce calculator scares shaky couples

By Yao Weijie

A new Web tool called My Divorce Calculator is scaring couples into staying together.

The tool helps calculate the total cost of divorce proceedings based on property division, litigation, attorney fees, child support and lost work hours.

Liu Xiaolan, one woman who was planning to separate from her husband, found that the cost of divorce would decimate her financially.

Liu bought her house before she married in 2006. The down payment was 300,000 yuan and she took out a loan that would be settled in 20 years with 4,000 yuan monthly payments.

When she married, she and her husband began paying the mortgage in joint. As Liu made the down payment, she would retain the house in the divorce. However, the 240,000 yuan she and her husband paid on the mortgage during the last five years would have to be split.

At minimum, Liu would have

to pay her husband 120,000 yuan – not including the home's value-added premium. She would also have to take over total payment of the next 15 years of their mortgage.

With their child being taken by the husband, Liu would lose 20 percent of her salary in child support payments – about 1,200 yuan per month.

She would also pay 4,150 yuan for litigation and 80,000 yuan in attorney fees. Based on all the costs, Liu would only be able to retain 1,200 of her 8,000-yuan salary.

"If I knew divorce would cost so much, I wouldn't have gotten married," Liu said.

The calculator has been a popular topic on many Web forums, where users are debating whether divorce is "worth it."

"Although the cost of divorce can be very high, sometimes you just have to do it. Wasting your life in an empty marriage is just as expensive," said a netizen called baihe56.



My Divorce Calculator helps calculate the total cost of divorce proceedings based on factors such as property division and child support.

Photo provided by Niu Li

Data from the National Department of Civil Affairs showed that 465,000 couples divorced during the first quarter of the year. That

works out to an average of 5,000 divorces each day.

About 14.6 percent of all marriages end up in divorce.

School's collected clothing bound for love supermarkets

By Yao Weijie

Sons of the Farmers, a Beijing Normal University association, held a two-day clothing drive for local migrant workers last week.

Clothes collected on the drive will be donated to United Heart Home of Hope, a local NGO that resells the clothing to migrants at a low price.

While many students were willing to donate their old clothes, some were uncomfortable with the idea that their donations would be sold.

"This is contrary to my understanding of charity," said Wu Xiaonan, a student of Beijing Normal University.

United Heart resells the clothes for between 2 and 3 yuan. The earnings are used to support housewives who are married to migrant workers, and the remainder is distributed to their families, Sons of the Farmers said.

United Heart was formed by migrants some five years ago and began cooperating with Sons of the Farmers in 2009.

It has established love supermarkets and centers for migrant woman and children in five migrant worker communities on the capital's rural fringe. Most of these are located in Shijingshan District.

"We visited one of United Heart's love supermarkets and believe in their financial management," one member of Sons of the Farmers said.

"Many women in the migrant worker community have nothing to do except raise their children. The donated clothes need to be sorted and disinfected. By cleaning and selling the clothes, they can earn an extra 1,200 yuan per month," said Wu Xiaoduo, head of United Heart.

"We also have to pay rent for our love supermarkets. Some enterprises provide us with occasional financial aid, but there are additional costs involved in maintaining these services," Wu said.

In the early stages of its charity work, United Heart provided clothing for free. However, many of the clothes ended up discarded.

By attaching a price to the articles, migrant workers tend to be more careful about choosing clothes instead of grabbing a stack and throwing out anything that doesn't fit when they get home.

"There are several reasons [United Heart] charges money. First off, people tend to cherish things that cost money. Also, allowing migrant workers to pay helps them retain their dignity instead of being made to feel like beggars," said Yang Qiaobao, a member of Sons of the Farmers.

"Migrant workers expect to purchase basic commodities. It is an insult to give them free goods when they are capable of surviving on their own. Of course, we would provide free clothes to those workers who are in really desperate situations," Yang said.

Guide dog users find no freedom

By Han Manman

Many people in China first learned about the use of guide dogs by watching the 2004 Japanese film *Quill*. But in contrast to the respect the dogs received on the screen, they remain heavily discriminated against on the Chinese mainland.

It has been six years since the first guide dogs were trained in China. However, the few blind people lucky enough to have won a guide dog have been routinely prohibited from using the dogs to navigate public spaces.

Canine eyes

Vivian is a guide dog trained by Dalian Guide Dog Training Center. Today she assists a 53-year-old Beijinger named Qi Jinyou.

Last month, Qi and Vivian were invited to participate in the opening ceremony of the capital's first movie theater for the blind. It was Vivian's first time being allowed inside a public entertainment venue.

Qi lost his sight to glaucoma. Since he won the dog in mid-2010, Vivian has been his eyes.

"When she senses a threat, she leads me away or runs around me in circles and doesn't allow anyone to touch me," he said.

Qi injured himself several times before he received Vivian. In one of his worst accidents, he fell down a staircase and broke two ribs.

"Now, if there is a pitfall ahead, Vivian will stand in front of me and block me from going further," Qi said.

But in spite of how important Vivian is to Qi's mobility, he has been prohibited from taking her into supermarkets or onto public transportation – even after explaining that Vivian is a guide dog and not a pet.

"There have been times when we were stuck waiting for more than an hour to find a taxi driver who was willing to stop for us," Qi said.

"Since there are so few places that will let me enter with Vivian, we often have to stay home. It's a shame, because her special ability is going to waste," he said.

No dogs allowed

Qi is not the only blind person to encounter these problems.

Lin Yan, a blind woman from Shenyang, Shandong Province, learned just how often Beijingers are prevented from relying on their guide dogs when she came to the capital to record a TV program last month.

During her five days in the capital she was prevented from taking her guide dog Sherry on the city's subways and buses, rejected by taxi drivers and barred from entering most restaurants.

Lin said that while some people in Shenyang have been intolerant of Sherry, she was unprepared for the discrimination she would encounter in the capital.

"When I tried to go around town with my guide dog, I ended up having to phone the police for help. No one was willing to take me home," Lin said.

Even the police were powerless. She said one officer helped her hail 10 taxis, nine of which refused to take her when they found she was using a guide dog.



Four blind people receive their new guide dogs at Dalian Guide Dog Training Center.

Photo provided by You Fangqiu

of blind people to use their guide dogs in public areas.

Pet regulations further complicate guide dog use.

Currently, Beijing residents are prohibited from owning large dogs if they live within Fifth Ring Road. However, the breeds used for guide dogs tend to be large dogs like Golden and Labrador retrievers. The same regulations prohibit owners from walking their dogs during the daytime.

The only law that comes close to addressing the issue of guide dogs is Article 58 of the Law on the Protection of Disabled Persons, which says that blind persons must observe the relevant provisions of the country when entering a public space.

"Of course, it does not elaborate on what these provisions are or how they are to be followed. In practice, blind people who depend on guide dogs end up asking for permission to use their dogs everywhere they go," said You Fangqiu, press officer of Dalian Guide Dog Training Center.

As director of Xicheng District's association for the blind, Qi has appealed to the government on multiple occasions to pass laws that would protect guide dog users.

"Without a guide dog, we have no freedom. But even with a guide dog, we have no freedom. It's a waste of resources."

Hard training

Training a guide dog is not only complicated: it's expensive.

You said it costs the center 120,000 yuan to train a guide dog, and that many of the dogs fail to graduate and become guides.

She said the puppies bred to become guide dogs at the center go through rigorous testing to determine if they have the proper temperament. Promising pups go through a year of hard training to become guide dog candidates. If they can survive a month of real use, the dog "graduates" and is passed on to a blind user.

The graduation rate is about 30 percent, she said.

In most countries, one in every hundred blind persons can get a guide dog. Given China has 16.9 million visually impaired people in the country and only 21 graduates



Training a guide dog is both complicated and expensive.

CFP Photo



Guide dogs are heavily discriminated against on the mainland.

CFP Photo

In the end, Lin spent the trip confined to her hotel room.

For the most part, public spaces in Japan, Australia and the

US are familiar with guide dogs and their use. However, China has been slow to pass regulations that would guarantee the rights



Lin Yan was routinely blocked from using her guide dog during a five-day trip to Beijing.

Photo provided by You Fangqiu

of guide dog school, the rate of guide dog use is shockingly low.

Many of the problems begin at the funding level.

She said guide dog training used to be funded primarily by donations, but the budget was not stable enough to train enough dogs to meet the needs of blind applicants.

Since last year, the central government has been subsidizing the program by paying 50 percent of the cost for each dog that graduates.

"It's greatly reduced our pressure," You said. The center is now training a batch of 50 dogs.

But more important than the subsidy is the news that legislators are currently reviewing a new regulation on the construction of "barrier-free" facilities. In a recent draft made public by the State Council's Legal Affairs Office, one article states that disabled people must be able to use all forms of public transport and public spaces while accompanied by their identified guide dogs.

If passed, the regulation will be the first official support of the right to use guide dogs in public areas, You said.

Public awareness

Guide dogs have only been available in China since 2004, when they were a research project conducted by Dalian Medical University.

But their use abroad goes back almost a century. The US and Germany began training guide dogs in the 1920s to aid veterans who lost their sight during World War I. Today, these countries have extremely mature systems for guide dog management.

In Japan, South Korea and Taiwan, guide dog use is protected by numerous regulations and is widely accepted by the public.

However, guide dog use remains a relatively new concept in China. Regulations are only the first step in guaranteeing the rights of the blind – public education is even more important, You said.

"Guide dogs allow blind people more freedom and boost their confidence. It helps them to feel they are not a burden on society," she said. "When they run up against these barriers to dog use in public spaces, it can deal a crushing blow to their confidence."

And that can be hard to recover.

"I hope people will learn to understand and tolerate the presence of guide dogs. At the very least, they should not discriminate against their users," You said.

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Waiting game

Professional queuers may mark end of scalping

Time is money, and businessmen know it: an emerging business of *paotui*, paid professional queuers, has spread recently, helping people save time from waiting in lines. Many believe the business will also put an end to the notorious *huangniu*, China's professional scalpers.



In major cities like Beijing, standing in line is an inevitable part of life. But now you can hire someone to do it for you.

Getty Images/CFP Photo

For those who are tired of being elbowed and shoved while awaiting their turn, a handful of "paotui" agencies, paid professional queuers, have cropped up to give a hand, CNN reported.

Such agencies offer to line up at the visa office, buy air tickets and even personally deliver fast-food meals.

Businessmen who have no time to pencil in trivial administrative

tasks and tourists from other provinces who have limited time make up the majority of the clients, the report said.

A check on e-commerce sites like Baixing, Ganji and Taobao turns up more than 10 paotui agencies. Prices start from 5 yuan for 10-minute tasks and go up to 200 yuan for 24-hour waits.

Li Qicai, 29, founder of a paotui

agency in Shanghai, told CNN that he could get about 60 requests a month from customers who have no time or patience for queueing.

With Shanghai's population predicted to double by 2050, local paotui runners like Li said the demand for the service is expected to increase, and hopes to expand the business into an efficient city-wide network. (Agencies)

The third eye

Paotui vs. Huangniu

By Huang Daohen

Can the emerging business of professional paotui companies stamp out scalpers? Wang Yimin (pseudonym), 63, a former Beijing scalper, said it might in the future, but not now.

Scalping, while illegal, is a way to make a living, said Wang, who claimed to be among the oldest scalpers in the capital.

"You cannot just ask them to stop, because many have a family to feed," Wang said.

Thirty years ago, when the country first opened up, there were lots of alternatives for people to make a fortune instead of starting a business. Scalping was one such way, especially for those who have a good social relationship and networking skills, Wang said.

Wang said many contemporary entrepreneurs started as huangniu. "They just hate to talk about it or mention it," he said.

Now known as Old Wang, he used to be known as *lao-jianghu* — a veteran scalper — 30 years ago. He sold train tickets in the city and later retired, using his earnings to start a trading business.

"At that time, I don't think there was much difference

between a trader and a scalper," Wang said. "We just use the same business rules: buy cheap and sell high."

Scalpers were problem-solvers, as they bought and sold things according to market demand. But Wang said it is much different for scalpers nowadays, as they are more organized and involved in violence and crime.

Train tickets for the Spring Festival travel season are now marked up 100 yuan, much higher than before, Wang said. What's worse, some are selling fake tickets.

Scalpers were recently blamed for a violent confrontation at the Sanlitun Apple Store, when a scalper allegedly tried to cut in line to buy an iPad 2.

Wang said it is much more difficult and competitive to be a scalper nowadays. "They have more opportunities, but also more risks, he said. "And now there are competitors from paotui services."

Wang believes professional queuing services will eventually replace scalping. "As long as the market is perfect and there are no gaps between supply and demand, you won't see scalpers," he said.



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Yum!

hungers for mutton

KFC's parent prepares for buyout of Little Sheep hotpot

By Chu Meng

Despite mock names like Kentucky Fried Sheep and Mutton Hut, Yum! Brands is serious about acquiring the hotpot chain Little Sheep.

But the mega-corporation's attempt to grab the small company could very easily run afoul of government watchdogs, who are concerned that the population of Chinese companies in the "global village" is getting smaller and smaller.



Yum! Brands has been swallowing up Little Sheep piece by piece for several years.

Jing Wei/IC Photo

Fast food mega-corporation Yum! Brands – the parent of KFC, Taco Bell and Pizza Hut – is set to swallow up the popular hotpot chain Little Sheep.

Ministry of Commerce spokesperson Yao Jian confirmed at last Wednesday press conference that it had received Yum!'s buyout application. The deal was struck in May for HK \$6.5 (5.38 yuan) per share and announced on May 13.

A long wait

Little Sheep Group Limited is one of the most successful chains serving quick Chinese food. The company, founded in 1999 in Baotou, Inner Mongolia, specializes in hotpot restaurants and meat and condiment processing.

The chain has 300 locations in 34 provinces, as well as several stores in the US, Japan and Canada. It was listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange in 2008.

Yum!'s offer represents a 30 percent premium over Little Sheep's last closing price of HK \$5 on April 21. It is expected to increase its holdings in Little Sheep to 93 percent from a current 27 percent, with the remaining shares in the hands of Little Sheep's founders.

Little Sheep Chairman Zhang

Gang said he will reduce his holdings to a 2.4 percent stake in the new Little Sheep if the Yum! deal goes through. The other founding shareholders would keep no more than a 4.6 percent stake in the company.

But Yum!'s buyout was not born overnight.

Even before negotiating the deal, Yum! owned 27 percent of Little Sheep's shares. The food giant acquired a 20 percent stake in Little Sheep for HK \$490 million in March 2009 through an investment firm attached to its China-based unit. It acquired a further 7 percent in October that year from Little Sheep's management.

Zhu Mingxia, an officer from the China Chain Store and Franchise Association and professor at the University of International Business and Economics, said Yum!, McDonald's, Subway and Starbucks have been declining in European and American markets since 2006. All are aggressively targeting Asia to prop up their profits.

"Yum! picked Little Sheep as its first prey. The company is aiming to be the overlord of the world's fastest growing business,"

Zhu said.

Yum! chose Little Sheep for four reasons: it is popular with Chinese consumers, accepted by foreigners, has a history of quality materials and a large network of existing stores.

"These are key advantages that most fast food operators in China lack," Zhu said.

Air of monopoly

The purchase of Little Sheep could add \$33 million (213 million yuan) to Yum!'s earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization, Morgan Stanley analyst John Glass said in a Bloomberg report.

Glass also said that Yum!'s revenue from China accounted for more than 60 percent of the Louisville-based fast food giant's profits in 2010. Most of this revenue was generated by KFC.

Though its spokeswoman Virginia Ferguson declined to comment, many suspect that Yum! is bracing for a monopoly investigation. The government has been especially watchful of large mergers ever since Coca-Cola's failed plan to acquire China Huiyuan Juice Group in March 2009.

"Yum!'s plan to acquire Little Sheep is strikingly similar. The

only difference is that the government is clamping down even harder on monopolies to fight the loss of national brands like Jian Li Bao, Zhonghua Toothpaste and Little Nurse," Zhu said.

"If Yum! acquires Little Sheep, it would have a dominant position in the domestic market and be able to charge customers whatever it wants," he said.

Monopoly laws require an extensive review of mergers when the companies involved earn more than 2 billion yuan in annual revenue. Yum!'s sales in China exceed 33.6 billion yuan, and Little Sheep's annual global sales were 1.8 billion yuan, according to its last fiscal report.

The investigation would determine whether the acquisition of Little Sheep would harm rivals and consumers or hamper technological development.

Ministry spokesperson Yao said the first 30 days of the investigation is only the preliminary period. Monopoly investigations can last 90 to 150 days depending on special circumstances.

An investigation could begin when the ministry finishes checking the application to ensure that all documents are complete.

Bosideng to woo European consumers

By Huang Daohen

Bosideng, the country's largest down apparel maker, recently purchased a \$32.5-million (210 million yuan) property in London with plans to set up a flagship shop.

The new six-story building will be located at 28 South Molton Street, near the Oxford Street shopping area that attracts more than 30 million tourists annually, according to a statement by Bosideng.

Under the plan, Bosideng will invest an additional \$10 million to transform the space into a local landmark. Its ground floor will showcase the company's latest down apparel, and the upper floors will serve as its European headquarters.

The shop, expected to open in July 2012, will be Bosideng's first flagship in Europe. Company founder and CEO Gao Dekang said he hoped it would increase the brand's recognition.

"This is an important step for Bosideng to expand into the international market and become a global brand," Gao said at last week's press conference.

But with annual sales of 5.7 billion yuan (\$886 million) and more than 7,500 retail outlets in the domestic market, Bosideng's costly London venture seems unreasonable to many.

Why should a Chinese brand spend so much to enter the ailing European market? After all, international brands are flooding China to take a chunk of the country's consumer spending and bolster their own flagging sales.

While it would be easy to blame the decision on a reckless pursuit of face, consultant Linda Sun at McKinsey of Shanghai said it is actually a solid strategy.

In spite of their thriftiness, Europeans are still leading the world in fashion. The chance to really be seen in Europe is something Bosideng and other domestic brands lack.

"They have to be accepted as classy by European consumers," Sun said, "it's no small task."

McKinsey reported that domestic companies' lack of global experience makes it difficult to go global by acquiring and merging with foreign brands. Many companies, especially those that are privately owned, lack CEOs with a cross-cultural background and experience in managing foreign employees.

"[Merging] saves time, but causes many more problems," Sun said. While they can benefit companies that are looking for rapid global expansion, Bosideng's way is smarter, she said.

"Getting their brand recognized will be a time-consuming battle," she said. "You have to put it where your consumers can access it, which is why Gao Dekang is so determined to make his London store shine."

Chinese moms want to give birth on US soil



More pregnant women have chose to give birth outside the Chinese mainland recently.
Qi Yunfeng/IC Photo

By Yao Weijie

Pregnant Chinese mothers boarding planes to the US to give birth have recently come to the attention of the American media.

Times Weekly used "frenzy" to describe the trend of Chinese mothers giving birth in the US.

NBC said the Chinese mothers will never cause the US social burden, unlike illegal immigrants from Latin America or Mexico.

Since April 9, when Hong Kong public hospitals began refusing pregnant women from the mainland, many middle- and upper-class families have chosen to give birth in the US so their child is of American nationality.

Some agencies have seized the chance to launch "birth tourism" as a business. Some Yuezi Centers

— places that take care of pregnant women using traditional Chinese methods — launched group purchase deals, discounted to 80,000 yuan from 110,000.

Yuezi Centers are cooperating with Chinese agencies in a project called Birth in America. The agencies are in charge of finding guests and helping them with visa and flight tickets, while Yuezi Centers are in charge of the reception in the US. Currently, these Yuezi Centers are mainly in Los Angeles and New York.

Some pregnant women contact Yuezi Centers directly, normally four months in advance.

According to the 14th Amendment of the US Constitution, anyone born in the US automati-

cally obtains America citizenship, access to public education, university loans and the right to vote. This is the legal basis of "birthright citizenship."

A US poll showed that 49 percent of American citizens support "birthright citizenship," while 46 percent oppose. Some Americans think it is unfair to enjoy welfare without paying taxes.

Sing Tao Daily, Hong Kong's second largest Chinese-language newspaper, said after the next president is elected, whether Republican or Democrat, there will be changes to the birthright citizenship clause.

Parents of Chinese children with US citizenship can apply for green cards and emigrate to the US after their children turn 21.

Comment

Risky to give birth in the US

Many Yuezi Centers are in poor condition and expensive in the US, and some are not even registered with local authorities. I heard of a Yuezi Center in Los Angeles that cost 17,500 yuan for expectant mothers.

One should also consider some concrete problems. For example, under Chinese law, double nationality is prohibited. If your son has a US passport, Chinese law will not allow him to be registered in his local area, which means he will not be admitted to Chinese schools. Do you have a way to solve this problem?

There is another question: the American system doesn't totally exclude people who don't pay taxes, but those who do not pay as much tax as Americans cannot expect the same benefits. The requirements of each state are different. What if your children cannot enjoy the benefits of either China or the US?

Giving birth in the US is too hard. If you choose to go down

this path, you must know that you will not be paying only for the birth and postnatal care, but also the extra costs that come from a whole new life.

— Wang Lu, mom who gave birth in the US

It benefits

There are definitely some benefits to giving birth in the US. For me, as an expatriate in the country, my son will be given better treatment than in China. But the policies are changing every year, so who knows. It might be popular to give birth in China in the future.

But whether there are any benefits doesn't affect me. My bottom line is, even if there are no benefits to giving birth there, I can afford the 100,000 yuan easily. If you care too much about the money, giving birth in the US might not be a good choice.

— Jingxue, mom who is preparing to give birth in the US

Unnecessary to block

Repealing "birthright citizenship" will have a bad effect on US

politics and the economy. According to research by Raul Hinojosa Ojeda, professor at UCLA, any plan to deport illegal immigrants will result in a loss of up to \$2.6 trillion in GDP.

Those rich Chinese mothers pay for giving birth in the US. They go shopping there and live there for a while. It seems unnecessary to block it.

— Nick Bowley, teacher

Protect current system

Repealing birthright citizenship would lead to discrimination and greater injustice and inequality. The reason for objecting to birthright citizenship is because these children don't pay taxes but enjoy public benefits. However, would you nullify a beggar's nationality because of the same reason? If no, you shouldn't cancel birthright citizenship for these children.

I think the system is worth protecting, instead of canceling the rights for some individuals.

— Liu Chenyu, staff of Ministry of Education

Guangdong to clone entire Austrian town

By Han Manman

Impressed by its idyllic landscape, a Chinese company in Guangdong is planning to clone the Austrian mountain town of Hallstatt, a UNESCO World Heritage site that's home to 800 people.

Named "Hallstatt See," the replica town will be situated in Boluo County in Huizhou in Guangdong Province, which shares similar geographic features.

According to the company's plan, the small Austrian town, including its idyllic lake and old church, will be carbon-copied.

Developed by Minmetals Land, the real estate arm of Chinese industrial giant Minmetals Corp, the twin city is scheduled to be completed in 2017. The project will cost 6 billion yuan. It is expected to become a major tourist attraction and real estate hotspot in the Pearl River Delta region.

Comment

A chance of visiting Austria

I don't think there is anything wrong with the project. It provides me a rare chance to see what a foreign town is without going abroad. I'm 27 years old, but I've never been abroad because I don't have money.

I don't care if the town is copied or not, at least it can help me fulfill my dream. A girlfriend once said to me that she is envious of those who have money to travel to Europe and take beautiful wedding photos. I hope the town can be built as soon as possible, then I can bring her there to fulfill her dream.

— Li Zhe, a migrant worker

Stay true to own culture

While China is in the midst of soaring economic growth, some Chinese people have come to

admire anything foreign, from goods to manners to ideas.

I am baffled that Chinese feel they need to copy European history and historical sites. It is like taking a copy of a Tibetan village and putting it in a suburb of Beijing and then adding some Indian things into it and then trying to make people believe that it is Tibetan.

Of course it could be interesting to use new city plan ideas, but China has so much culture by itself, why not display that instead? Please don't dilute it; be true to your own culture, because we cherish the unique Chinese culture when we visit your country.

— Anders Bager, a tourist from Sweden

Cloning at a new level

This isn't the first time I've

heard about the issue. In Chengdu, there is a British town modeled on the English town of Dorchester.

China already has a bad national image of copying just about everything, from DVDs, cell phones to cars. The copy of foreign towns takes cloning to a new level.

Though copying others' success may be a shortcut to gaining profit, we cannot always depend on copying others. If China goes on like that, our already lowered reputation will be fully destroyed. As a Chinese person, I don't want to hear foreigners say "that's a country that only knows how to copy."

— Zhang Peng, an employee at a local architecture company

Free advertisement

We're happy to know that Chinese find our town beautiful

enough to copy. It is great advertisement for us and gives our town publicity. It will also help us attract more Asian visitors, which are an important source of revenue for Hallstatt. At least some Chinese who have seen the copycat version of Hallstatt will want to visit the original.

— Ingrid Janu, souvenir store owner in Hallstatt

Culture cannot be copied

I've been to Hallstatt before. It's a very charming, centuries-old town. Even though the developer can copy the surface of the town, it can never copy its inside. What really makes the town unique is the town's people and its profound culture, which can't be copied.

— Kevin Chu, former employee of Austria National Tourist Office in Beijing

Foreign fans of 'red' songs sing their hearts out

By Wei Xi

Mark Levine, a 63-year-old US professor at Minzu University of China, is an American country music fan.

It might make this next part sound strange: he also has an avid interest in Chinese revolutionary – or “red” – songs.

Long before coming to China, Levine began singing red songs of countries like Spain, Italy, France and Cuba. After living in China, it was only natural that he pick up Chinese revolutionary songs, never mind the fact that he barely spoke the language.

“I came to understand a lot of young people don’t pay any attention to that kind of music,” Levine said. “I thought that was kind of a problem because the lessons the music teaches and the principles they stand for are very important.”

In order to get youngsters to pay attention to these songs, Levine began to sing to them in his own unique style.

“The fact that I sing them a little differently causes people

to listen,” Levine said. “And the other thing is, they may think, ‘Here’s a foreigner who doesn’t speak Chinese, who went through these troubles to learn these songs.’”

Levine has performed in bars and clubs, and also on TV shows and during festivals. Among the songs he sings are “Without the Party There is No New China,” “The East is Red,” “Why Are the Flowers So Red” and “Liuyang River.”

Levine has also written songs of his own, including “Mood from the Chinese Countryside,” “My Lovely Asian Eyes,” “It’s the Kites that Own the Sky” and “To Make Its People Strong.”

In China, red songs came into being during the Chinese revolution and the building of the People’s Republic of China. They were extremely popular during the early- and mid-20th century, but has gradually died down since the 1990s.

Red songs have seemed to grow popular again in recent years. A number of red choirs and singing groups have sprung

up, and competitions are constantly being held.

More foreigners like Levine have also become red fans. Many of them dress like a Chinese soldier, wearing a red scarf or holding Mao’s Little Red Book while singing the songs.

As early as 2007, George Costow, known to netizens as “Hong Laowai” (The Red Foreigner), a New Yorker, posted several videos of himself singing red songs. His performances raised discussions. Some Chinese netizens said they liked the guy, while others thought his half-naked image was an embarrassment to the revolution.

Among the more well known foreign red singers are a British man named Iain Inglis, an American woman named Haley Yang and a Ghanaian band called Black Eagle, which participated in a competition held by Jiangxi TV. Recently, a group of foreign students at the University of International Business and Economics organized its own red-song band.

Many other foreigners enjoy singing red songs in bars and restaurants.

Levine said he thinks the recent surge in Chinese red songs is largely due to foreigners’ increasing attention on China. They want to be part of China’s rapid growth.

As for why so many foreigners have given public performances, Levine said some are obviously seeking fame; others do it because they simply like it.



Levine singing red songs at Shaoshan Mao Zedong Memorial Square
Photo by Yu Tianjiu

Nobel laureate helps celebrate Spanish Language Day



Photo provided by Institute of Cervantes

By Zhao Hongyi

Hundreds of local fans of Spain joined the Spanish over the weekend to celebrate Spanish Language Day at the Institute of Cervantes in Beijing as part of a global campaign to promote the language worldwide.

The June 18 celebration began with Spanish word puzzles, tales and classes and continued with talks about Spanish soccer and literature. The institute prepared snacks and drinks from Spanish-speaking countries around the world. Peru’s Mario Vargas Llosa, the 2010 Nobel Prize winner in literature, participated in the celebration in Beijing. The great writer, poet, critic and political commentator spoke with Chinese fans and signed books. He handed out awards to the best Spanish storytellers as well.

This was the third consecutive year the Institute of Cervantes held Spanish Language Day celebration in its 78 institutes around the world. In a competitive world, Spain is prepared to use its language as a tool for promoting itself. It faces competition from the British Council and American Cultural Centers around the world, and from French Cultural Centers, the Goethe Institute of Germany and Confucius Institute of Chinese.

Israel’s ‘Madame Curie’ shares Nobel experience with Chinese students

By Han Manman

Representing the height of Israeli science, Ada Yonath, winner of the 2009 Nobel Prize in chemistry, was invited to China last week for a lecture tour in cities including Beijing, Tianjin and Fuzhou.

“Israel is a country that always welcomes innovation and crazy ideas,” said Yonath, who is known as Israel’s “Madame Curie.” “Even though some of the ideas are believed to be absolutely impossible to achieve, the country will provide people the chance to try.”

In every lecture, Yonath encourages students to dare to dream and pursue innovation.

Yonath is the fourth woman ever to receive chemistry’s highest international honor for her breakthrough work with the structure of the ribosome. She is also the first woman from the Middle East to win a Nobel Prize in the sciences.

For Yonath, 72, her achievement was greatly inspired by the Polish-French scientist Marie



Ada Yonath
Photo provided by Mike Young

Curie. She said when she was a child, she was fascinated by Curie after reading her biography and made it her goal to become a scientist.

She said what Curie really inspires in her is the spirit to follow dreams, no matter how hard the road.

Yonath was born in 1939 in a poor family in Jerusalem. Despite their poverty, her parents sent her to school to assure

her a good education.

She said the emphasis on education is rooted in Jewish culture. No matter rich or poor, Jewish people will invest a lot in their children’s education. Normally, children just one and a half years old will be asked to recite poetry and classical works in order to cultivate an interest in science and culture.

Yonath said historical realities also contributed to an excess of Jews in intellectual and scientific fields. Because Jewish people were prohibited from owning farms or joining the army in Europe through the Middle Ages, they became doctors, scientists, musicians and lawyers.

Yonath said the reason behind Israel’s outstanding achievements in scientific research is also due to the spirit of teamwork, transparency and the country’s great support for scientists. She said Israel has less competition but greater cooperation in scientific research, in contrast with many developed countries.

Office cafe seeks to bring together investors and entrepreneurs

By Zhang Dongya

It's a cafe, but it's not much interested in serving quality coffee. Besides, people who come here don't care about the drinks.

Owner Su Di, 32, said he's in the business of making "incubator" coffee. "We're providing a set of office facilities for start-ups, and the only cost to them is one cup of coffee," he said.



The cafe-office model, popular in foreign countries, is now expanding quickly in China.

Photos by Mockingbird

Come with the tide

Located on the second floor of an unheralded hotel, Garage Coffee actually has the best location in the city: one office building to the east is Kaifu Lee's "Innovation Works," an early-stage incubation and seed money business; to the south is Microsoft and Tencent; and to the north is Sina.

Garage Coffee has made itself a fixture of the Chinese Internet industry. Seven start-up groups with nearly 30 people have booked it as a permanent de facto office.

Founder Su Di got his start as an investment director of ChinaCache, an Internet content and application delivery services provider. He got the idea of an "open office" last June and founded Garage Coffee in April after a year of preparation.

"Garage is not the replica of any foreign model," Su said. "I didn't know of similar things in other countries when I got my idea, but later I found out it's very popular in North America. And as far as I know, at least 20 such places have been started in recent years."

He said it was exciting for him to find similar cafes in the US and Finland. "It's a sign that people really need it," he said.

With an area of 800 square kilometers, Garage Coffee can accommodate 150 people. It is equipped with office facilities including whiteboards, projectors and Wi-Fi. There's an open area in the cafe and a small meeting room that can seat 10 people, and a larger meeting room for investors and entrepreneurs to talk and negotiate. A small bookshelf in the corner provides people reading material on the IT field and management.

People only need to order a 20-yuan cup of coffee – which comes with free refills – to use the cafe for the entire day. But Garage can give guests benefits that Starbucks and Costa never can.

Instant success

More IT elites like Kaifu Lee and his partners in Innovation Works are frequenting the cafe. More investors and start-ups are gathering there to hunt for future partners.

Su said it's a good sign when an investment manager sees three or four projects in one day. But in Garage, they can see eight or ten. Su hopes Garage can become an important part of start-ups' growth.

Su's major job during the first two months of his cafe's opening was talking to every person who walked in. His first words usually were: What product are you working on?

Each day, he talks to nearly 30 people and has more than 10 deep talks. He gets to know every person's situation and sometimes serves as a go-between to introduce different people to one another.

Mosioey, Garage's first customer, won his first investment in the cafe. So far, investment deals for four projects have been sealed in Garage Coffee.

"It's not just IT guys. Some in the communications industry also come to Garage, and traditional industries have already won investments here," Su said.

More start-ups that go to the cafe do so with the intention of meeting a partner or investor.

Sam Xu, 32, has worked in



Founder Su Di's dream is to make Garage Cafe an important part of start-ups' growth.



Start-ups can stay for an entire day in Garage after buying a 20-yuan cup of coffee.

Garage for about three weeks. He founded a fashion website and ran it for two years by himself.

"I'm doing software and don't have a wide circle of acquaintances," he said. "It's not an easy thing to find a partner, and I hope I can find one here so that we can do the website together."

He added, "If such a place existed earlier, I wouldn't have had to run a website by myself for two years!"

Garage is considering devoting a wall to showcase the successful

deals that have been made in the cafe. Su hopes someone will stand out and go public within five years – "that'll be the biggest testament to [the cafe's] success."

A hit model

The cafe-office model has expanded quickly.

Beta Cafe, originally from Hangzhou, opened a Beijing branch in February. Originally founded as a place for friends to hang out, Beta soon became a hotspot for the IT crowd. When it opened in Beijing, there was a long list of dis-

tinguished guests from the IT and technology industries.

Beta, located in the same building as Innovation Works, has also become a hub for Internet people. Youku employees often work or have meals in Beta – or both. Tencent employees enjoy discounts there. Beta also provides the latest job information at the entrance as well as whiteboards and Wi-Fi. The cafe is considered more than a cafe, and is often mentioned in the same breath as Garage.

"I don't like to be compared with other cafes – I think no one likes that," Su said. "It's pretty good for similar cafes to start up because they will help the market. It is very necessary to promote ideas and concepts in this country."

"The working space has to be acceptable. If more people can share open working spaces like this, then more such places will arise. The more the better."

Another cafe, 3W, is located in Zhongguancun, the technology hub in Haidian District. With more than 100 big names in medium-to high-end positions in Internet companies as stockholders, the cafe is planning to ask one stockholder to be a guest server during an evening shift each day. Whether or not this is just a publicity stunt, it's gotten both investors and customers excited.

"It's closing gaps between investors and start-ups," Su said. "We hope in the future, Garage can become a gathering place for more investors and entrepreneurs – that is the most meaningful thing for both Garage and the industry."



Return to Customers with Super-value Experience

Gift Packs to Celebrate the 100 Days Countdown to China Open 2011

To celebrate the 100 Days Countdown to China Open 2011 on June 17, 2011, China Open Ticket Office presents super-value gift packs. Anyone who buy China Open tickets worth RMB 100 from June 17 to June 30 will get an exquisite souvenir of China Open.

Note: Tickets to GROUND PASS and PACKAGES are not covered in this event

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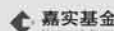
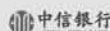
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Summertime is playtime



Tuanjiehu Park's outdoor pool attracts many families during summertime with its relatively low prices.

Photo provided by Google.com

By Wei Xi

No matter whether you're crazy about jogging or have a fancy for beaches and waves, you can find an outdoor activity here.

Nike Run Club Beijing

This is a long-distance running club established by the Nike Sanlitun Store that has organized group runs every Tuesday night for the past year.

It counts 2,800 members, and every week 100 people or so show up to run.

"The normal distance is 2.6 kilometers, which is a circle around Sanlitun Village," said Chang Shuang, a Nike staff member in charge of the running program. "We recently added a new distance of 5 kilometers, which goes around Gongti."

"We have a theme every week and on holidays we organize special activities. For example, on Children's Day, we played some kids games to cherish the memory of childhood," said Gong Yuelin, another club staff.

Before the run, a professional coach will guide the club members in warm-ups, and after each run, each participant will get a towel, a bottle of water and a banana. VIP members who have finished a total

distance of more than 50 kilometers will get a sports drink and a Snickers bar.

Guo said eating a banana after running replenishes lost energy and calcium.

Niu Chao, a running coach for kids, is a regular participant. He said he has come almost every Tuesday, even on rainy days.

"To run for a long distance alone is always dull, but I have met a lot of friends here and their company makes the running less boring and more fun," Niu said. He also believes long-distance running helps build a person's willpower.

"It's my first time taking part in this group running," said Guo Jingsong, a 26-year-old legal medical expert. "The running path is well designed. You can watch the night scene of Sanlitun while running, which is more enjoyable than running on a circular track."

Where: Nike Store, 19 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7 pm, Tuesday every week

Cost: Free
Tel: 4006 610 900

Beijing Happy Magic Water Cube

Newly opened Beijing Happy Magic Water Cube claims to be the

largest and most advanced water theme park in the world.

It has 18 attractions and more than 50 waterslides, plus an aquaplay area for kids.

The Water Cube gets about 30,000 visitors every day. It's necessary to plan your activities to avoid the long lines.

Sohu.com published an itinerary: purchase the entrance ticket half an hour to an hour before the opening time; when you enter, queue for the large-scale and thrilling attractions, such as Tornado, Behemoth Bowl, Plummet Body Slide and Octopus Racer.

There are a number of cafes and shops inside the park. Visitors can rent a locker for 50 yuan (plus a 30 yuan deposit).

For more information visit happymagicwatercube.com.

Where: 11 Xiaotun Lu, Fengtai District (take Bus 507 or 338 and get off at Meishikou. If you are driving, take West Fourth Ring Road and go west along Meishikou Lu.)

When: 10 am - 7 pm
Cost: 200 yuan for adults, 160 yuan for children under 1.5 meters, free for children under 1.2 meters

Tel: 8860 9999

The beach at Chaoyang Park

A sandy beach in Chaoyang Park lies to the west of the beach volleyball ground, previously a practice area for Olympic beach volleyball players.

Apart from a large sandy area for families, there is a standard-sized pool and some smaller ones for younger children.

Visitors who enter the beach after 6 pm on weekdays can get a discount price of 50 yuan.

Where: 1 Chaoyang Gongyuan Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 9 am - 9:30 pm, until August 31

Cost: 80 yuan (120 yuan on holidays and weekends)

Tel: 6593 8383

Tuanjiehu Park Water World

Located near the central business district, Tuanjiehu Park's water world has beaches, swimming pools, waterslides and a water castle.

Where: 16 Tuanjiehu Nanli, Dong Sanhuan Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 10:30 am - 8 pm, every day

Cost: 40 yuan on weekdays, 50 yuan on weekends, free for children under 1 meter

Tel: 8597 4677

ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to: weiyang@ynet.com

Where can I get a BlackBerry smartphone in Beijing? I have used a Nokia N93 for years and want a BlackBerry Curve 8520. By the way, my service is China Mobile. Will it work on BlackBerry?

You can get a BlackBerry at any big electronics stores, such as Joy City at Xidan, Dinghao at Zhongguancun and Bainahui at Chaoyangmen. But to make sure you get a warranty, you should always go to registered stores. China Mobile has BIS, but the service has been modified. Not all BlackBerry services work, but Gmail and Google Maps should.

I am from the US and have a Master's degree in engineering. I used to teach computer science at Nan-chang University for five years and got along well with both students and faculty. Now I am thinking about moving to Beijing and finding a similar job. How would I go about doing this? Where should I look?

First, create your own resume and upload it onto job-hunting websites. There are a lot of such websites: you can try zhaopin.com, 58.com or 51job.com. Also, there are many international high schools in Beijing. If you are also qualified to teach high school, you can find jobs among schools like Western Academy of Beijing and the International School of Beijing.

Hi, I just moved to Beijing and want to know where I can buy the following things: Romaine lettuce, extra virgin olive oil, 100 percent whole wheat bread, Greek yogurt and Bran Flakes.

April Gourmet and Jenny Lou's, with their dozen chain outlets, will have all that you need.

(By Wei Xi)

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Beyond recording

By He Jianwei

If recording was the initial function of the video, then artists have completely reinvented the medium during the past 40 years. HBOX, an exhibition which opened this month, presents works by eight artists from seven countries to show how video has grown from a medium of documentary to platform for cutting-edge art.



1



2

A silver box that looks like a spaceship is in the main hall of Today Art Museum. The self-contained mini-cinema can seat 12 and is used to screen short films in total darkness. Designed by architect Didier Fassin, this HBOX is a hybrid object – both a screening room and a travel kit. "It's a screening room conceived as an itinerant piece of furniture or a suitcase," Faustino said at Today Art Museum on June 11. "I hope the box is seen as a space shuttle, bringing the audience to a place where the artist's work has been presented by the artist."

The HBOX has been sponsored by Hermès Foundation since 2006. It offers stipends of €25,000 (320,000 yuan) to four artists every year. The curator Benjamin Weil creates the yearly pool of artists and selects their works.

There have been 21 videos by artists from 15 countries included in HBOX. Starting from Pompidou Center in Paris in 2007, HBOX has screened its collection at major museums in London, New York, Tokyo, Seoul, and Taipei.

The box travels to three cities each year. In March, it was at the Artboxje Center in Seoul. Today Art Museum is its second destination.

"Video has a rich history as an art medium. Artists began to make video art in the late 1960s," Weil said. "From the very beginning of its existence, the artists documented performance and experimented with new narrative structures."



The Wolf and Nanny, 2009, Cliff Evans



Do Not Harm Your Ghost, 2010, Huaywen Nam



Band of Seven, 2010, Sara Ramo

ture and image formats. I wanted to show how video art has developed since this beginning."

For this exhibition, Weil selected two videos by Chinese artists: *Zero* by Wang Jianwei and *The Birth of RMB City* by Cao Fei.

Weil selected Wang's studio in 2009 to watch the artist's films. "I was so impressed that Weil was the first curator to come to my studio and sit through two 22-minute videos – *The Omen* and *Hesitate*. After finishing those, he asked me for more," Wang said. "Most curators only watch 5 or 10 minutes of each video and skip ahead."

As a video and multimedia artist, Wang observes society through his camcorder lens. Most of his inspiration comes from the lives of ordinary people.

Zero was inspired by the series of Foxconn suicides in 2010, when 12 employees of the manufacturing giant leaped to their deaths from the dormitory. All the jumpers were between the ages of 19 and 21.

"It's weird that there was no warning that they would commit suicide," Wang said. "One bought more time on his mobile phone an hour before falling himself, another killed himself by jumping from a high-rise building."

"We normally think of suicide as something that is preceded by a sign – usually giving away one's money or leaving a message," he said. "They showed no fear in the face of death. It was like they just transitioned from life to death with no line separating the two."

In the video, a man falls down a building in slow motion and observes what is happening on each floor as he passes. Wang designed seven rooms to show people's

desire for food and sex and their attitudes towards life and death. The scenes reflected a confusion about life and anxiety about the future.

The title comes from an architectural term: architects refer to the foundation of a building as "zero," and the foundation of a virtual city named after the Chinese life.

"It's similar to my other work *Yellow Signal*, which represents everything between permission and prohibition. Both are signals of an intermediary state of being."

Although he uses video as a medium to create his works, he prefers not to be called a video artist. "I design everything in my video, from the setting to the actors. Filming is just a way to realize my ideas," he said.

Another Chinese artist Cao Fei was Weil's discovery in an exhibition in Spain.

But the development of technology has broadened the definition of film.

This is exemplified by Chinese artist Cao Fei's 2009 film *The Birth of RMB City*. The animated short follows the development of a virtual city named after the Chinese life.

The film showed the development of parallel worlds, where virtual people communicated to buy land, erect buildings and run their business.

The virtual city "broke ground" in 2008 when Cao built a Tiananmen Square and Bird's Nest stadium, as well as the Oriental Pearl Tower of Shanghai. It reflected modern China with city pests, papers with ads and busy construction sites.

"It fascinates me that [Cao] combined virtual life and reality together," Weil said.

The artist is not only the creator, but also China Tracy, a citizen of the virtual city who made friends, played music and lived in other virtual places.

"RMB City is a virtual city where all the elements you can see in every city in China," Cao said. "It's an experiment exploring the creative relationship between real and virtual space, and an observation of the explosion of urban development."

HBOX is screening videos by six other artists.

A piece by Sam Hooyeon from South Korea questions the line between fiction and reality with a performer standing in front of a blank wall. John Kollins from Germany explores the process and memories of other performers. Mark Lewis from Canada discusses the theme of time using scenes shot from the top of one of the last buildings designed by Mies van der Rohe in 1967.

Sara Ramo from Spain maps a chaotic reality with a band of seven musicians playing out of tune in front of a blank wall. John Kollins from Germany explores the process and memories of other performers. Mark Lewis from Canada discusses the theme of time using scenes shot from the top of one of the last buildings designed by Mies van der Rohe in 1967.

Cliff Evans from the US breaks down the crazy world of globalization using materials found online. Nihil Chopra and Munir Kahani from India rediscover the consciousness of the identity in post-colonial India.

The exhibition will continue throughout the month at Today Art Museum. In July, it will be moved to Guangzhou for the Guangzhou Triennale.



Man Exits Rock, 2011, Nihil Chopra and Munir Kahani



TD Center, 5th Floor, 2009, Mark Lewis Photos provided by Today Art Museum



1 Zero, 2010, Wang Jianwei
2 The Birth of RMB City, 2009, Cao Fei

Photo by Andrea Lejona

HBOX Exhibition

Where: Today Art Museum, 32 Baizwom Lu, Chaoyang District
When: Until July 11, 10 am – 5 pm
Admission: 20 yuan, 10 yuan for students
Tel: 5976 9804



Dressage, 2009, Julika Rodelius

A Ya c|fgcZ Vfcgg! W'h fYcXnggYm

By He Jianwei

American writer Susan Conley's story began like many others'. In 2007, she made the decision to move to Beijing with her husband and children.

When she arrived, she decided to write a book about the experience of dropping two American boys into Beijing – a city in a country where they could not speak the language and did not know one person.

"I hoped the book would be a travelogue that had humor and parenting tales," Conley said.

That was before she was diagnosed with breast cancer.

Having learned of her illness, *The Foremost Good Fortune* became a memoir of her two-year life in Beijing and her struggle with disease.

"As my life changed, the book changed. I often say that as I opened up to my cancer and began to understand it, my memoir opened up and grew to hold all these different themes in it. I feel lucky for getting to write the book. It helped me to understand the China that I saw and it helped me to understand cancer," she said.

On June 12, Conley returned to Beijing to speak about her book at the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA).

She told stories of setting off fireworks at a yogurt shop in a Houhai hutong. Her sons asked her for permission to set off fireworks with the shopkeeper and his child. At first, she worried about their safety, but then allowed them to play so that they



could integrate into the new culture and merge into the city.

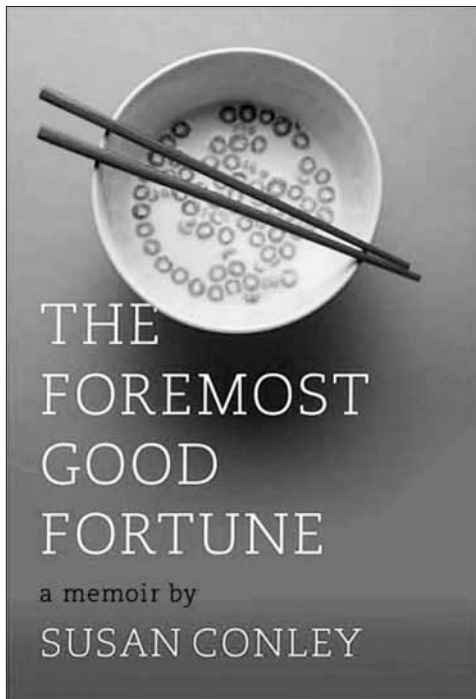
Speaking about her illness, she said her first instinct was to hide it from her young children. Eventually, she took her doctor's advice and told her sons the truth. She said it was their bravery that gave her strength.

The title of the book comes from a line in the Buddhist Dhammapada 15: "Freedom from illness: the foremost good fortune."

"My book is about much more than cancer and illness. At its heart, the book is about good fortune – the good fortune of having healthy children, a caring husband, the chance to move to China and to learn about such a fascinating country," she said.

When she returned to the US, she found that many Americans were hungry for stories of Chinese people – stories that helped portray how the culture is changing today.

"Often the media paints things in black and white: China is this, or China is that. But what my colleagues want to



The Foremost Good Fortune
By Susan Conley, 288pp, Knopf, \$25.95

know more about is something nuanced. They would like insight into people just like themselves in China – hard-working parents, business people, artists and writers," she said.

"[They] are coping with their day-to-day lives and finding ways to give meaning and hope to their lives," she said. "This is the China that I try to show my readers in my book."

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By Xinji Letu

For centuries, Asian tradition has held that marriage is "necessary" for adults.

But despite two decades of substantial shifts in Chinese society, little has changed in the way people see marriage, Taiwanese novelist Jade Y. Chen said at Trend Bookstore last Wednesday.

More than 20 years ago, Chen posted a personal ad in several newspapers under the name "Miss Wu." Her meetings with the 107 men and one woman who responded gave her material for her most famous book, *The Personals*, a story of Miss Wu's 42 blind dates.

Inspired by invisible theater, a drama style she obsessed over while studying in Paris, Chen painted a vivid picture of the lonely singles of Taipei.

"I faithfully recorded the dates and my feelings. The actors were the blind dates I met up with and our stage was Taipei itself," Chen said.

Today, the book's message of loneliness and pressure remains strong as ever as China's singles struggle to live up to expectations of love and marriage.

Unlike modern dating shows, the singles in Chen's book were a marginalized group – people who remained single for various reasons.

"Most of them probably feel OK about their single status, but they are marginalized



The Personals
By Jade Y. Chen, 265pp, People's Literature Publishing House, 32 yuan

by the mainstream idea that every adult should be married," said Liang Wendao, a TV critic.

Current data shows that millions of women and men are staying single in big cities such as Beijing and Shanghai. Those "leftover

women and men" have been a popular topic for social commentators.

That may be because single status remains something extremely negative to East Asian observers.

"People will think you are pathetic if you are not married when you have reached a certain point in your life," she said. "It seems that we Chinese do not understand the benefits of being alone."

Chen said that 20 years ago, when she told her friends in Taipei that she went to see a movie alone, they would think it was pathetic. She was surprised to learn that, 20 years later, people in Beijing and Shanghai still think the same.

"Loneliness, to me, is indispensable. The feeling of being lonely gives me room to reflect on myself and see what makes me different from others," Chen said. That introspection is essential to planning one's future.

In her book, Chen seems to justify the idea of being single. After hundreds of blind dates, the protagonist remains alone.

Marriage cannot solve everything.

If one is happy alone and can still attract others with his or her charm, then there is no need for blind dates, Chen said. "If you can feel good when you are alone, then you are definitely strong enough to find the right person that you can spend time with for the rest of your life."

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Located at The Place, Trends Lounge is a bookstore and cafe with a wide selection of books about international art, design and architecture.



Masterpieces of Western Art
By Ingo F. Walther, 760pp, Taschen, \$59.99

This book traces the history of painting from Medieval times to the present day. Unlike conventional publications that merely illustrate a few essentials, this work collects 900 paintings from every era. Each chapter features an introductory essay profiling the age and the achievements of the major artists and presents selected works accompanied by searching commentaries.



Cult Streetwear
By Josh Sims, 208pp, Lawrence King Publishers, \$29.95

Showcasing more than 30 pioneering streetwear brands, this book focuses on the labels that have shaped the market since the late 1980s. It tells the stories of the people behind the brands – from entrepreneurs to graffiti writers, and disc jockeys to surf dudes to sneaker nuts.



Very Small Cafes & Restaurants
By John Stones, 256pp, Lawrence King Publishers, \$45.2

This book features 40 projects by international designers. Almost all of the establishments featured measure less than 150 square meters and challenged the designers to create a big effect with very little space. The book is inspirational for designers faced with the challenge of a tiny cafe or restaurant, as well as for independent food retailers looking for fresh new ways to present their products.

(By He Jianwei)

Outlets feed capital's fashion obsession



"Luxury is getting more affordable for people in middle-income circles. I may not be rich like Bill Gates, but I can still dress like Britain's Princess Kate if I shop at the outlets," said Jiang Shan, a 29-year-old fashionista and stewardess for China Airlines.

Jiang has been attending the China-US flight route for the last five years and was one of the first customers to start shopping at Chinese outlets.

"Outlets have been around for about a hundred years in the US. Initially, they were opened outside the city near where luxury brands produced their wares. In Beijing, the first outlets opened only 10 years ago," she said.

That outlet had its start about a decade ago, when Jiang was still an English student at Beijing University of Technology. Jiang watched developers break ground on what would become the city's first outlets, Yansha Outlets, outside Fourth Ring Road.

At the time, Fourth Ring Road was a line separating the city's downtown from the rural outskirts.

"The mall was really huge. It had an ugly warehouse appearance and bad interior decorations. Stores were crammed next to each other and sold discount products from a hodgepodge of name brands. The clothes were not ironed and were just tossed onto the display shelves," she said.

The location was less an outlet than a dealers' market, where leftover stock could be dumped. But as a poor student obsessed with name brands, combing the outlet became her hobby. She bought her first adidas classic hoodie and Levi's 501 jeans from its vendors.

"I was among the trendiest people on my campus. I visited twice a month," she said. "Besides clothes, it also had restaurants like McDonald's, Starbucks, Subways, Dairy Queen, Mr. Pizza and a huge parking area that was free to shoppers," she said.

It wasn't long before the roads around the mall began to jam up.

When Jiang started her job as a stewardess on international flights, she got her chance to see inspiration for the Yansha outlet. She began visiting American outlets on her flights to



New York, California, New Mexico, Nevada and Florida, where she would stock up on the seasons' latest items.

"Each outlet has its signature brands. You can remember the outlet by which brand's flagship acts as its anchor. Then, next thing you have to find out is how often they update their products. Most get new shipments either weekly or monthly – the question is after what kind of delay," she said.

She used her experience earned traveling abroad to open an online luxury brand retailer in 2007. "I could feel there was a big domestic demand for luxury products, but outside Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Sanya, people had nowhere to buy them," she said.

Business slumped in 2010 as more retail outlets opened in the capital. Beijing Scitech Premium Outlets opened near the airport last summer and brought a slew of new luxury retailers to the market. Yansha Outlet upgraded at the same time, offering new direct chain stores for luxury brands.

"After discounts, the products ended up about the same price as those bought abroad," Jiang said.

At the end of last winter she closed her online store and teamed up with some of her former clients to organize the Outlet Black Belts group to find and report on the best fashion prices in China.

At the end of last year,

By Chu Meng

Two new outlets opened on the city's outskirts during the first 10 days of the month with a third opening this week. The outlet boom has been a result of industrial mass manufacturing and over-production.

As expected, the capital's fashion fans have already figured out where to buy the best Bulgari sunglasses or where to find matching last season's clothes with classy Salvatore Ferragamo ribbon heels.

For the Outlet Black Belts, discounted name brands are their prey.



Jiang Shan, organizer of Outlet Black Belts
Photo provided by Jiang Shan

subway. Know the best way to get there and plan ahead for traffic jams if you are driving. Since most outlets are far

from the city center, planning ahead is the smartest way to go.

3. Be comfortable. Shopping at outlets is full-day affairs and includes a lot of walking. To get the most out of your experience, make sure you're wearing comfortable clothes.

4. Take your family or friends. Outlets are fun and should be a day-vacation. Bring friends and family and enjoy the environment. Shopping should never be stressful: it should help you relax. Many outlets offer restaurants and entertainment for the entire family. Make sure you pick an outlet that provides an entire lifestyle experience.

China's top outlets

This list was released by the China Outlets Association this month. It ranks outlets according to brand value, business scale and customer satisfaction.

1. Florentia Village Outlets: Known for having the flagship factory stores of Prada and Fendi.

2. Surprise Outlets: The only China outlet for Lane Crawford, Gieves & Hawkes, Dolce & Gabbana.

3. Beijing Scitech Premium Outlets: Offers an open-air park theme and restaurants.

4. Beijing Yansha Outlets: Known for having the flagship factory stores of Coach, Swarovski and Nike.

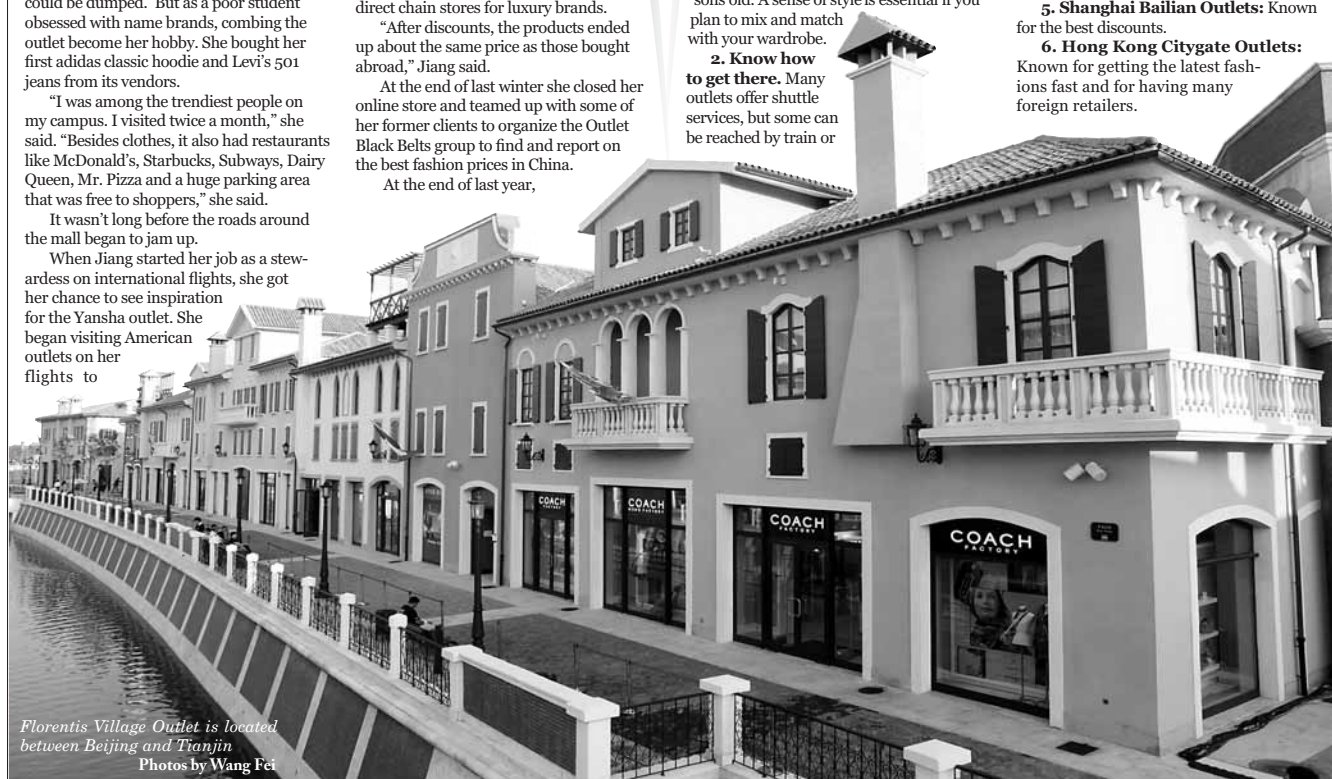
5. Shanghai Bailian Outlets: Known for the best discounts.

6. Hong Kong Citygate Outlets: Known for getting the latest fashions fast and for having many foreign retailers.

1. Do your research and be prepared. Not all products sold at the outlets have rock-bottom prices. Check out the original price of the clothing or accessories you plan to purchase so you can gauge how much of a bargain you are getting, if any.

Choosing the right outlet can make all the difference in your experience. Florentia Village, for example, is known for selling products from luxury labels like Prada and Fendi that are fewer than three seasons old. A sense of style is essential if you plan to mix and match with your wardrobe.

2. Know how to get there. Many outlets offer shuttle services, but some can be reached by train or



Florentis Village Outlet is located between Beijing and Tianjin
Photos by Wang Fei

Summer items from high-end Italian online boutique



Balmain top, 16,677 yuan



Red Valentino, 2,617 yuan



Givenchy skirt, 9,202 yuan



Hong Kong fashion blogger at the Luisaviaroma party

By Annie Wei

According to a recent report by Goldman Sachs, China spent \$6.5 billion (43 billion yuan) on luxury goods in 2010, and the number of Chinese who spend on luxury goods will increase from 40 million to 160 million within the next five years.

The country is expected to become the biggest luxury consumer in the world.

The boom of luxury retail has not only convinced more high-end brands to open boutiques in Beijing and Shanghai, but it's led to the creation of luxury websites as well.

Luisaviaroma.com, a high-end Italian boutique that aims to provide local shoppers the most up-to-date and seasonal fashion items, just launched its Chinese version.

Luisaviaroma started in the 1930s with the goal of satisfying demand for high-end fashion and luxury. For 80 years, Luisaviaroma has been known for its delicately picked products and quality service.

It has a team of professional buyers who have purchased the latest products in men's and women's wear, shoes and accessories from the four leading fashion weeks of Milan, Paris, London and New York.

Luisaviaroma and its site have retail dealership with hundreds of known brands like Chloé, Givenchy, Fendi, Dior Homme, Dolce&Gabbana, Dsquared, Lanvin, Christian Louboutin, Balmain and Moncler.

Some mass brands like Levi's Strauss and Lacoste provide products exclusively for Luisaviaroma. It even has a "buy it first" service, which helps consumers be the first in the world to set hands on the latest designer runway pieces.

Although the hot items do not come cheap, *Beijing Today* scouted its site and found some great deals: one can find 50 percent discounts on silk or cotton dresses by brands like Lanvin and Preen, bringing the price to around 2,500 yuan. In Sanlitun Village North, a bright orange silk Lanvin top from this year's spring and summer collection starts at 10,000 yuan.

Alexander Wang's long gray sleeveless dress, starting at 560 yuan, is also available.

Its Chinese website prices all items in yuan at a 10 percent mark up compared to prices in Europe.

All produces are delivered through FedEx and DHL. Each order will have a formal invoice. The price noted on the site is all-inclusive, covering value-added tax exemption, delivery fee and import tax.

Last week, Luisaviaroma invited 40 fashion bloggers from around the world to Italy, where they mixed and matched items.



Amaya Arzuaga dress, 7,066 yuan



Fausto Puglisi, 7,223 yuan

Dolce&Gabbana pants, 2,554 yuan

Simonetto Ravizza fur coat, 26,381 yuan



Diego Dolcini shoes, 11,149 yuan

Photos provided by Luisaviaroma.com



Chef Réne Meilleur

Michelin star chef's recipes

By Annie Wei

Since yesterday, Réne Meilleur, a two-Michelin star chef from the French Alps, has been working with Yannick Ehram, chef of Le Pre Lenotre of Sofitel Wanda Hotel, to present a pleasant dining experience.

Beijing Today asked him to share the recipes of two of his best dishes.

For the special menu he will prepare on his seven-day visit in China, Meilleur adapted his French creations to local tastes, with items like hot chocolate mousse with orange ice cream and potato soup with black truffle aroma and potato powder.

Asparagus soup, poached egg, rice leaf

Asparagus soup:

Peel 1,700 grams of green asparagus. Cook al dente (tie the asparagus together), then cool in super cold water. Cut the asparagus tops and reserve them for plate decoration.

Put the other part of the asparagus in a blender. (You can add some baby spinach if needed).

Mix 1.5 liters of asparagus juice with 2 soft-boiled eggs; add another 500-milliliter mix of asparagus juice with 2 more soft-boiled eggs and add 130 grams of seed oil and a little bit of sea salt. Skip it with a strain and keep it in the fridge.

Soft-boiled egg:

Cook 10 eggs (4.5 minutes), then cool and peel in a pan with water. Set aside in cold water in the fridge.

Rice paper:

Coat a sheet of rice with egg white and sprinkle with Parmesan on both sides.

Cut into 8 equal parts and let dry for one hour at room temperature. Fry quickly to 200 degrees.

Finish:

Break a hot egg into the bottom of the soup plate.

Add 5 small tops of asparagus for decoration.

Pour the cold soup emulsion. Put the broken rice paper on top.

Notes:

It's a healthy, green dish with protein, suitable for health-conscious diners who like to exercise during the summer.



Asparagus soup, poached egg, rice leaf

Photos provided by Sofitel Wanda Beijing

Le Pre Lenotre

Where: 6th floor, Sofitel Wanda Beijing, 93 Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 11:30 am - 2 pm; 6-10 pm

Tel: 8599 6666 ext. 6528

Cost: 688 yuan or 1,088 yuan

Pan-fried duck liver, corn pancake and honey sauce



Pan-fried duck liver

Photo by An Xu

Waffle dough:

Ingredients include: milk (375 milliliters), flour (50 grams), two eggs, one 1 egg yolk, sugar (10 grams), butter, (35 grams) and grape oil (10 milliliters).

Mix 375 milliliters of milk with 250 grams of flour. Add 2 eggs, 1 egg yolk and 10 grams of sugar. Mix until homogenized.

Melt 35 grams of butter and add

it to the waffle dough. Then add 10 milliliters of grape oil and season it with salt and pepper.

Let the mixture rest in the fridge for 2 hours.

Add 140 grams of fresh corn into the mix.

Dried corn powder:

Dehydrate 50 grams of corn for 3 to 4 hours in an oven heated to 80 degrees Celsius.

Then mix with a blender until it becomes a powder.

Filter it to keep it a thin powder. Keep in a special hermetic box.

Finish:

Heat a non-adhesive pan with butter and a 70-millimeter diameter and 1 centimeter-high tart circle.

Fill the circle with the waffle dough. Turn it in the pan after 2 minutes and cook slowly.

Take out the cooked dough and

put it on a kitchen paper to absorb the oil.

Take a 3-centimeter duck liver slice, add some salt and pepper. Pan-fry it for 1 minute on each side, then put it on absorbing paper.

Sauce:

Add half a soup spoon of honey and one soup spoon of balsamic vinegar, a little bit of water and a little piece of butter. Check if it is well seasoned.

Dress the plate:

Put the corn pancake in the middle of the plate, add the duck liver on top. Add a thin layer of sauce and add a corn powder line on the plate.

Notes:

The pancake will be soft, with a natural corn sweetness. The duck liver will be even softer and smoother.

There are some tricks: the pan should be very hot. If the pan temperature is not high enough, there will not be a nice crust on the bottom of the duck liver. Also, the liver should not be cooked for too long. If the liver is on the fire too long, its fat will come out and it will taste flat.

The chef said goose liver is expensive due to limited production. Before, people only knew how to produce goose liver. After they learned to make duck liver, many chefs found that duck liver was much finer and more delicate than goose liver. Now many chefs prefer using it.

Anyone interested can purchase fresh duck liver at Le Café de la Poste (58 Yonghegong Dajie, Dongcheng District; tel: 6402 7047).



Teppanyaki cuttlefish, 38 yuan with kimchi, 8 yuan



Yaneura's poster

Photos by An Xu

Dining in a cartoon world

By Annie Wei

Among the five small Japanese restaurants in Xinyuanli opposite Yuyang Hotel, Yaneura is one of a kind.

Its first location opened in Tokyo, Japan, around 1999, where waitresses engaged in costume play (or cosplay), dressing up as maids or butlers and treating customers as masters and mistresses. Such service is part of Japanese *otaku* culture, and is popular in Japan, Taiwan and Hong Kong.

Yaneura, as a small eatery that focuses on teppanyaki, opened last December. It has only two dining rooms and a small cooking area: one with several tables and a bar area, where one can find tatami - a straw mat used as flooring - and piles of Japanese comic books.

The food here is simple and inexpensive. The butter oyster (45 yuan), stewed beef tripe (18 yuan), fried seafood noodles (52 yuan), grilled octopus (30 yuan), grilled cheese scallion (45 yuan), steamed salmon (45 yuan) and grilled cuttlefish feet (25 yuan)

are all good deals.

We recommend teppanyaki beef offal (45 yuan), which goes well with Chinese cabbage and green chili. We also like teppanyaki cuttlefish (38 yuan) with kimchi (8 yuan). The diced cuttlefish is tender and fresh, while the spicy kimchi goes well with fried eggs.

However, we made a mistake ordering the grilled cheese scallion (45 yuan). Only two scallions were served, each topped with a piece of low-quality, thick cheese.

Most diners are young and absorbed in Japanese comic books.

During lunch hours, Yaneura offers 30 set meals between 15 and 35 yuan, including small pieces of salad, kimchi, miso soup, a main dish, rice and egg custard. For more luxury dining, one can choose its buffet (108 and 198 yuan), which includes beef hotpot, teppanyaki and sushi.

To complete a great meal, one should try Japanese beer (20 yuan per draft), sake or soju. Potato soju costs between 250 and 450

yuan per bottle, and the wheat one is between 160 to 400 yuan.

Yaneura is not where one looks for a high-end Japanese dining experience, but it's still a fun experience. If you like Japanese comic books, you might really enjoy its ambiance, as many young Asian men do.

Waitresses in blue miniskirts, long socks and white aprons smile a lot and look cute. They have big eyes, long hair and are young, just like in the comics.

Servers are required to be friendly and chat about comic books and cosplay, but diners aren't allowed to take photos or ask for their servers' personal information, like their real name.

Tonight and Saturday, Yaneura will host its first cosplay festival.

Yaneura Cafe Restaurant

Where: Floor 2, 8 Xinyuan Xi Li Zhong Jie, Chaoyang District

Open: Monday to Friday, 5:30 pm - 2 am the next day; Saturday and Sunday, 11:30 am - midnight; Tel: 8448 8689

Cost: Starting from 15 yuan per person

Art by migrant children

By He Jianwei

Titled Poetry of Growth, an exhibition of more than 120 paintings, calligraphic works and clay sculptures by 90 children from Beijing's two New Citizen Schools opened on June 18 at Today Art Museum.

Founded for children of migrant workers, the New Citizen School aims to solve the problem of poor schooling for migrant children.

The exhibition is serving as a closing cere-

mony for 90 students who are involved in the Innovative Art Education Program initiated by JP Morgan and Today Art Museum.

In the past three months, the students attended art courses every Saturday at Today Art Museum. Artists gave lectures and taught the children basic painting, calligraphy, sculpturing and puppeteering for shadow puppet plays.

"Art education is important for a museum," said Zhang Zikang, the museum's director. "Our generation didn't have the opportunity to go to the museum in our childhood. We hope every child who

is interested in art can go to museums, even exhibit artworks."

"We adults paint by brush and by our concept, but children paint by their heart."

In their paintings, the children draw portraits of classmates, teachers and people they dream to become in the future. Some of the scenes are from the courses they attended.

Among the lectures that were given was one by Peking Opera performer Tan Zhengyan, who taught the children about Peking Opera in March.

"Maybe most of them won't be artists in the future, but art is a window for them to see the city and feel the world," Zhang said.

Initiated in September 2009, the project teaches art in three-month semesters to migrant children. The past four semesters have seen more than 330 students sign up.

Twenty teachers from the New Citizen Schools also attended the project in the past one and a half year. More than 1,500 students have benefited.

Poetry of Growth – The Exhibition of Migrant Children

Where: 2F exhibition hall of building 3, Today Art Museum, 32 Baizhiwan Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until June 29, 10 am – 5 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 5876 9804



Friday, June 24

Exhibition Tao Na Solo Exhibition

Square and handmade are the main characteristics of Tao Na's works. She tries to answer the question, "What is really reality?"

Where: MK2 Art Space, 255 Caochangdi, Chaoyang District

When: Until July 17, daily except Monday, 11 am – 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6431 1567

Nightlife Wonderful Day – The Life Journey's New Album Release

After more than three months of preparation, the local band The Life Journey will release its new album tonight. Special guests from Taiwan will perform at the debut.

Where: Yugongyishan, 3-1 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 9:30 pm
Admission: 60 yuan advance purchase, 80 yuan at the door
Tel: 6553 2678

Movie

Mao's Last Dancer (2009)

This film tells a story based on the autobiography by Li Cunxin. At the age of 11, Li is plucked from a poor Chinese village and taken to Beijing to study ballet. In 1979, during a cultural exchange to Texas, he falls in love with an American woman. Two years later, he goes on to perform as a principal dancer for the Houston Ballet and as a principal artist with the Australian Ballet.

Where: Sculpting in Time Café, Beihang University, 37 Xueyuan Lu, Haidian District

When: 7:30 pm
Admission: 15 yuan
Tel: 8231 0664



Saturday, June 25

Exhibition Designing Design – The Exhibition of Kenya Hara in China 2011

As Japanese design guru

Kenya Hara's first major solo show in China, this exhibition will attempt to trace Hara's creative ideas and career and provide a distinctive overview of the nucleus of Japan's design industry through a large display of design objects and documentations.

Where: Beijing Center for the Arts, 23 Qianmen Dong Jie, Dongcheng District

When: Until July 14, daily except Monday, 10 am – 8 pm

Admission: Free
Tel: 6559 8008

Movie Fata Morgana (1970)

German director Werner Herzog's film captures

mirages in the Sahara desert. Reciting the Mayan creation myth, the director narrates the story of nature and human creation with scenes from abandoned places in Africa.

Where: Broadway Cinematheque, 2/F Building 4, North section of Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), 1 Xiangheyuan Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 2 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 8438 8258 ext. 8008

Nightlife

Who is Michael Jackson!

With the anniversary of Michael Jackson's death approaching, four popular local bands – Galaxy, Zebra Run, Cam and Fuzzy Mood – will sing Jackson songs.

Where: Red Point Art Factory, 36 Guangqu Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7:30 pm
Admission: 60 yuan
Tel: 5205 1113

Sunday, June 26

Exhibition Compliments to Vermeer – Jin Shangyi Solo Exhibition

Jin is a Chinese artist who has devoted his entire life to oil painting, never ceasing to pursue the special beauty of this art form. Through this exhibition, he wants to pay tribute to Dutch artist Johannes Vermeer and express his concerns about contemporary society.

Where: CAFA Art Museum,

8 Hua Jia Di Nan Jie, Chaoyang District

When: Until July 3, daily except Monday, 10 am – 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6477 1575

Nightlife

Capital M Indoor Concert

Zhu Yibing's cello band, established in 2004, strives to promote indoor performances in China. It has worked with many renowned musical groups from all over the world and established its status as a premier Chinese indoor performance group.

Where: Capital M, 3/F, 2 Qianmen Buxing Jie, Chongwen District

When: 4 pm
Admission: 65 yuan, 20 yuan for student

Tel: 6702 2727

Movie

Deep in the Clouds (2010)

This story takes place in a Lisu Village near the Nu River on the border between Yunnan, Tibet and Burma. Di Alu, in love with Mu Pa's sister, Ji Ni, is banned from pursuing her according to Lisu tradition. Mu Pa is arrested

after cutting down a national protected plant. Mu's father tries to marry Ji to A Da to settle Mu's case. But Ji, dressed in a traditional Lisu wedding outfit, disappears into a foggy mountain on her wedding day.

Where: Broadway Cinematheque, 2/F Building 4, north section of Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), 1 Xiangheyuan Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 4 pm
Admission: 40 yuan
Tel: 8438 8258 ext. 8008

(By Xinji Letu)

Upcoming

Nightlife

Moscow Night – Classic Russian Songs

Russia 21st Century Basso Chorus will present a series of classic Russian songs and operatic classics including *Carmen*, *The Marriage of Figaro* and *Faust*.

Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall, Zhongshan Park, Donghuanmen Lu, Dongcheng District
When: June 30, 2 pm
Admission: 50 yuan
Tel: 6559 8285

Stage in July

Concert

Chen Sa Piano Recital

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: July 8, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-400 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Dresden Philharmonic Children's Choir

Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), 18 Zhaodengyu Lu, Xicheng District

When: July 12, 7:30 pm
Admission: 30-100 yuan
Tel: 6417 7845

King's College Choir

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: July 15, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-400 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Lorin Maazl and Castleton Festival Orchestra

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: July 29-30, 7:30 pm
Admission: 180-680 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Dance

Grand Ballet of Montreal

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: July 20-21, 7:30 pm
Admission: 100-580 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Drama

On the Road

Where: Nine Theater (TNT), Chaoyang Culture Center, 12 Jintai Li, Chaoyang District

When: July 5-10, 7:30 pm
Admission: 100-500 yuan, 50 yuan for students
Tel: 6551 6930

Some Kind of Poison

Where: Multi-functional Theater of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: July 20-29, 7:30 pm
Admission: 200-680 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Opera

Purcell's Dido and Aeneas

Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), 18 Zhaodengyu Lu, Xicheng District

When: July 15, 7:30 pm
Admission: 20-100 yuan
Tel: 6417 7845

(By He Jianwei)

Tips for stopping tick bites

By Li Zhixin

A Beijing resident and a dog in Longzeyuan, Huilongguan, Changping District were found to have been bitten by ticks last week.

Tick bites have recently been reported throughout the provinces of Henan, Hubei, Shandong, Anhui and Jiangsu. More than 280 of those bitten developed tick bite fever and 10 died.

The municipal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have been monitoring ticks in the city since the discovering of the local bite. The Changping government carried out exterminations in the area the bites were reported, but the CDC said city-wide extermination is not being planned.

The centers established two monitoring points in Miyun County and Huairou District to search out and test animals that have been bitten by ticks. Blood tests of 81 rats and 19 dogs showed no signs of the new bunyavirus being carried by some ticks.



What are ticks?

Ticks are small arthropods, similar to spiders, which feed on the blood of warm-blooded animals. They usually live in grassy areas, shrubs and forests. Most prefer cool and moist air, but some ticks can be found in residential areas.

The CDC said there are more than 800 species of ticks throughout the world, 110 of which live in China. The most common tick species in Beijing is the *haemaphysalis longicornis*.

Ticks can painlessly burrow into skin using their mouth and feeding parts to draw out blood until they are completely full. After they are fully gorged, they detach from their host animal — a process which can result in their feeding parts being left behind.

Ticks are carriers of numerous viruses, bacteria and protozoan parasites, and are second only to mosquitoes for spreading disease. Tick-borne diseases include Lyme disease, Babesiosis, human granulocytic Ehrlichiosis, tularemia, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, Colorado tick fever, human monocytotropic ehrlichiosis and relapsing fever.



CFP Photo

Symptoms of tick bite fever

Tick bites usually occur in rural or wilderness areas, especially when people are camping out or walking in the grass.

The tick bite fever that results from some bites is due to a bacterial infection transmitted by the tick. The disease is caused not by bites, but by the toxins or organisms passed in the tick's saliva.

The most common symptoms of tick bite fever include a black mark where the bite occurred, fever, severe headache, malaise, rashes, swelling and pain in the joints, shortness of breath, palpitations and vomiting.

The black mark at the site of the tick bite is called an eschar or a tache noir. It appears as a small ulcer ranging from two to five millimeters in diameter. The eschars can be single or multiple and sometimes can be hard to find, as they usually appear only as symptoms develop. Enlarged lymph nodes are also common near the site of an eschar.

A rash is not always a feature of tick bite fever, but when it appears it consists of small red marks on the skin. The marks can be raised. Typically, they begin on the limbs and spread to the trunk. In extreme cases, the rash spreads to the palms of the hands and soles of the feet.

Symptoms of tick bite fever usually begin after an incubation period of five to seven days.

Tong Ying, the director of the Disinfection and Pest Control Section of CDC, said most forms of tick bite fever are mild and that patients can recover without treatment.

"The body will normally take around two weeks to recover from this condition. Antibiotics and medical care can help to reduce healing time. If you find that you have a tick bite, just keep an eye out for symptoms of tick bite fever and make sure the bite doesn't become black and necrotic," she said.

Quick tick removal

Ticks attach firmly to their hosts, and rough or improper handling could result in portions of the head and mouth parts remaining embedded in a victim's skin. Leftover parts can become the site of infection and inflammation, and could increase the likelihood of transmitting a disease.

1. Use a small pair of curved tweezers and carefully flip the tick over onto its back. Grasp the tick firmly with the tweezers as close to the skin as possible. Pull gently until the tick comes free. Twisting or turning the tick does not make removal easier because the mouthparts are barbed. Such actions may break off the head and mouthparts and increase the chance for infection.

2. Once removed, don't crush the tick. Smashing its body can spread any pathogens to your skin. Instead, you should rinse it down a sink or

flush it down a toilet. Consider keeping it in a tightly closed jar or taped to a piece of paper. You can show the tick to your doctor if you become ill from the bite.

3. The area of the bite will leave a small crater where the head and mouth were embedded. If portions of the head or mouth remain, they should be removed by a doctor.

4. Thoroughly cleanse the bite area with water or a mild disinfectant. Observe the area for several days for development of a reaction, such as a rash or other sign of infection.

5. Apply first-aid antibiotic cream to the area.

6. Remember to wash your hands thoroughly after handling ticks or instruments that touched them. Clean and disinfect any instruments that were used.

Tips for avoiding bites

Although there is no vaccine against tick-borne diseases and bites cannot be entirely preventable, there are ways to minimize your risk.

1. Wear light-colored clothing. This will make ticks easier to see and brush off.
2. Wear long pants and long sleeves. Tuck your pants into your boots or socks.
3. Ticks enjoy hiding in long hair, so keep your head and hair inaccessible by wearing a hat.
4. Walk on clear trails or the grass when you go to countryside.
5. Promptly check yourself, others and pets if exposed to an area with ticks.
6. Make sure to treat pets with flea and tick repellent. Wear gloves when removing ticks from your pets, otherwise you risk spreading any tick-borne pathogens to your hands.



Historic, scientific and low-carbon tour of Xicheng

By Zhang Dongya

The 10th Shichahai Culture Tourism Festival, organized by the Xicheng District Tourism Bureau, began last Friday and will last until the end of September.

Because this year is the centennial of the Revolution of 1911 and the 90th anniversary of the founding of Communist Party of China (CPC), many historic places and sites will be free to the public. Other attractions located along subway lines will be revived with the idea of environmental protection and low-carbon travel.

Historic tour

To commemorate the centennial of the Revolution of 1911 and the 90 anniversary of the CPC, many historic sites are included in this itinerary.

Imperial Temple of Emperors

First built in 1531 during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), it was an important place where emperors of Ming and Qing (1644-1911) venerated and offered sacrifices to emperors of past dynasties. There are shrines 167 emperors and 79 meritorious statesmen.

When Sun Yat-sen, an important leader of the Revolution of 1911, died in 1925, his coffin was placed for a while in the Imperial Temple.

Where: 131 Fuchengmen Nei Dajie, Xicheng District

Getting there: Take Bus 13, 42, 603, 685, 814 to Baitasi stop.

Open: 9 am - 4 pm

Tel: 6612 0186

Admission: 20 yuan

Former Residence of Li Dazhao

Located in Wenhua Hutong, this is an important residence of Chinese intellectual Li Dazhao. Li lived in Beijing from 1916 to 1927. He lived in eight different places, but his home in Wenhua Hutong marked his longest residence: four years. The courtyard is believed to have housed many of Li's revolutionary activities, including co-founding the CPC and leading the labor movement in north China.

Where: 24 Wenhua Hutong, Xicheng District

Getting there: Take Subway Line 1 or 2 to Fuxingmen Station.

Open: 9 am - 4 pm

Tel: 6608 9208

Admission: 10 yuan

Former Residence of Soong Ching-ling

The residence was a garden of Qing Dynasty's Prince Chun. In 1963, Soong Ching-ling, the wife of the revolutionary statesman Sun Yat-sen, moved to the garden and spent the rest of her life there. It's elegantly laid out, with rocks, ponds and cypresses. Pictures, letters and his-

torical documents showing the life of Song are on display.

Where: 46 Houhai Bei Yan, Xicheng District

Getting there: Take Bus 5 or 210 to Guozishi

Open: 9 am - 5:30 pm

Tel: 6404 4205

Admission: 20 yuan, 5 yuan for students

Prince Gong's Garden

This is a unique Qing Dynasty garden - one of the best preserved - located in the northwest of Shichahai. There is a typical courtyard here with an exquisite garden with pavilions and corridors.

Yi Xin, or Prince Gong, was one of the owners of the garden, lived there between 1852 and 1898. He is known for advocating the Westernization Movement (1861-1894) during the Qing Dynasty.

Where: 17 Qianhai Xi Jie, Xicheng District

Getting there: Take Bus 13, 42, 107, 111, 118, 204, 612, 701, 810 or 823 to Beihai Beimen.

Open: 7:30 am - 4:30 pm

Tel: 6616 8149

Admission: 40 yuan

Huguang Guild

Huguang Guild, first built in 1808 during the Qing Dynasty, was the guild of people from Hunan and Hubei provinces. It has a theater and garden in the yard. During the late Qing and early Republic of China (1912-1949) period, big artists like Peking Opera actors Tan Xingpei and Yu Shuyan performed in the Guild. Peking Opera and Chinese traditional arts like cross-talk are still staged in the Huguang Guild.

This place was also important because it's where Sun made several stump speeches. In 1912, Sun held the inaugural meeting of the Chinese Kuomintang in Huguang Guild.

Where: 3 Hufang Lu, Xicheng District

Getting there: Take Bus 23, 34, 66, 102, 603, 715 to Hufangqiao stop.

Open: 9 am - 5 pm

Tel: 6351 8284

Admission: 10 yuan

Continued on page 21...



Former residence of Soong Ching-ling



Former residence of Lu Xun



Imperial Temple of Emperors



Prince Gong's Garden
Photos by Mockingbird



Huguang Guild, the guild of people from Hunan and Hubei provinces, served an important role in Chinese history.

Photo provided by Xicheng District Tourism Bureau



Dining



Slacey dicey

At Summer Palace, we open people's minds to different perspectives from the way we slice our fruit to the type of fruit we used. Fruits can be used in more ways than you can imagine. Our innovative chefs have created a whole new menu of simple fruit puddings and imaginative Grouapa dishes.

Where: Summer Palace, China World Hotel, 1 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

When: July 1-31

Tel: 6505 2266 ext.34



Summer escape at Park Plaza Beer Garden

This beer garden in the middle of the city,

now open for its fifth summer, is the city's best spot to beat the summer heat. Enjoy delectable barbecue snacks, beers and summer drinks.

Enjoy Happy Hour between 5:30 to 7:30 pm. Buy your friend a beer and your drink is on us!

Where: Regent Beijing, 97 Jinbao Jie, Dongcheng District

When: Until September 16, 5:30 pm – midnight

Tel: 8522 1999 ext. 3621/3623

French night

Come and celebrate French Night at LAN Club and party with our foreign disc-jockey and three dancers. Be sure to invite your friends!

Where: LAN Club, 4F, LG Twin Tower, B12 Jianguomen Dajie, Chaoyang District

When: June 25, 9 pm – 3 am next day

Cost: Free; buy-one-get-one-free drinks before midnight; 25 percent off standard bar bottles all night.



Shell struck

Countries like Australia and cities like Boston are famous for their shellfish. However, a trip abroad can be tough to swing for dinner alone. China World Hotel makes it easy to satisfy your craving without leaving the country. Seafood lovers will appreciate our shell-shock-ing menu. Aria serves only the best!

Where: China World Hotel, 1 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

When: July 1-31

Tel: 6505 2266 ext.36



Zhizhi Wang visits the Crowne Plaza Beijing

Famous Chinese National Men's Basketball player Wang Zhizhi visited the Crowne Plaza Beijing Chaoyang U-Town on June 12. He was received by the hotel's General Manager Joseph Zitnik.

Marriott International announces opening of China Reservation Center

Marriott International recently opened its first dedicated Global Reservation Sales and Customer Care Center in China. The facility, located in the Pearl River New City district of Guangzhou, will service Marriott Worldwide Reservations, Customer Care and Marriott Rewards for company hotels throughout greater China.

"Marriott International is committed to China and to serving our ever-increasing number of Chinese guests in a location that offers an impressive labor talent at a great value. With more than 50 hotels in China, and at least another 100 in some form of planning, China is a crucially important market to us – and is now by far our second biggest market anywhere in the world," said Marriott Interna-

tional's L. Kaye Dengel, senior vice president of Global Sales & Customer Care.

"We are committed to giving our guests what they want at every point along their journey with Marriott, and this dedicated Reservations and Customer Care Centre is a key component of serving our Chinese guests."

The new center is a key part of Marriott International's Asia Pacific reservations strategy. It opened with the latest technology, infrastructure and 45 dedicated associates specially trained and focused on sales and the customer experience.

This new China Center joins Marriott International's Global Reservation Sales and Customer Care operations in India, Malaysia and Japan.

Info



Noble Mansion celebrates groundbreaking

Last Thursday, the Wanheng ESI "Noble Mansion" Groundbreaking Ceremony took place in Hunnan New District, Shenyang Province.

Florian Schmied, chairman of EuroSinoInvest, spoke highly of China's future development prospects. He thanked the Shenyang Municipal Government and the Hunnan District Government and relevant departments for their generous support and help.

Wang Zhongyan, chairman of Shidai Wanheng Group, described the project's future market position and its role in improving bilateral cooperation. He spoke in high terms of the good environmental conditions for economic development in Shenyang and the efficiency with which its provincial government operates.

Other officials and VIP guests also spoke at the ceremony.

Rent

CBD, Windsor avenue, 3 bedrooms

This spacious 167-square-kilometer, three bedroom apartment is located on East Third Ring Road between the Jingguang Center and Kerry Center.

It is minutes from the Guomao subway interchange and offers convenient access to high street shops, bars, restaurants, cinemas, gyms and galleries.

The apartment comes fully furnished with a modern bathroom and well-equipped kitchen, large living room and elegant bedroom. The complex has 24-hour security.

To rent the apartment for a year, contact anna988@live.cn for more information.

Price: 25,000 yuan per month (includes management fees and heating)

Hotel

Event

Sail to the Great Wall

This two-day expedition to the Great Wall is made for the adventurous sailor. Spend all day sailing to the start of Laolongtuo. Camp out for the night and then sail back the next day. There's a hotel option for those who prefer to sleep indoors. Day cruises will run on Saturday and Sunday subject to demand. Bronze Level sailing experience is an advantage, but not essential.

Use this event as a chance to complete your Gold Level – Go Cruising qualification, covering navigation and theory elements on Saturday before joining the cruise on Sunday.

The special package priced 1,900 yuan per person includes sailing and meals. Packages that include accommodations and transportation are also available. All packages are subject to terms and conditions.

Where: Beijing Sailing Center, Room 5005, 5F, Building A, Chaowai SOHO, B6 Chaoyangmen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

When: July 16-17

Cost: 1,900 yuan per person

Tel: 5900 0276

Email: sailing@beijingsailing.com

(By Jackie Zhang)

Chinglish story

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Li Zhixin at lizhixin@ynet.com.

Blacklist

This is a column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you're planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then watch out for this page each week.

Unhealthy sex?

By Chu Meng

Not long ago, panic about "HIV-negative AIDS," an unknown virus, attracted the attention of world health organizations.

Although the people who claimed to suffer from this ailment were found to have psychological rather than physical problems, the scare put the spotlight on the country's health and medical professionals.

Since 2004, a group of patients have been seeking attention and treatment for what they call "HIV-negative AIDS," a range of AIDS-like symptoms discovered through self-diagnosis, such as perpetually swollen lymph nodes, subcutaneous bleeding, joint pain, fatigue, night sweats and emaciation.

As of 2010, the Ministry of Health had received 59 reports of people with the condition in Beijing and Shanghai, as well as in the provinces of Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Hunan and Guangdong. In 2009 and 2010, the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offered free HIV tests to the 59 patients. No evidence was found of HIV or any new virus.

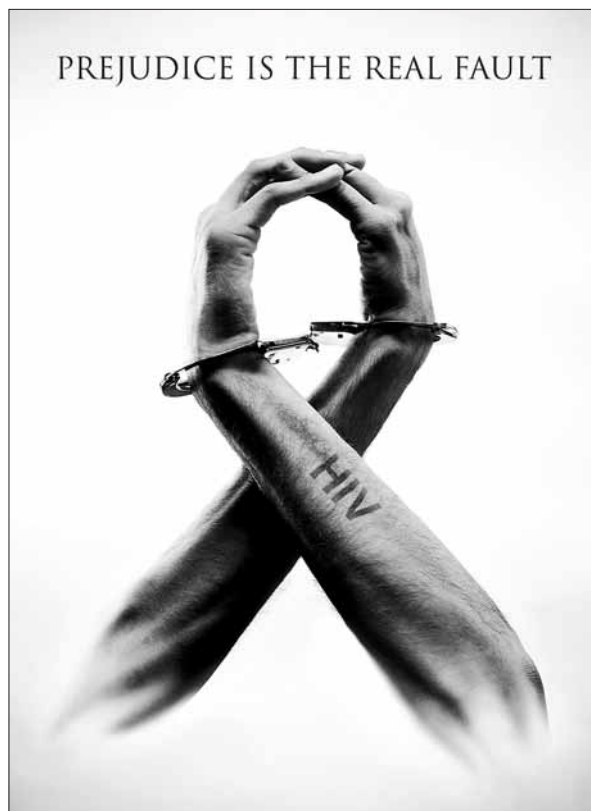
I was following the story while foreign media were preparing to publish unverified reports.

Kathleen Heugh, one of my Australian friends in Beijing, who had a habit of overreacting toward health and safety concerns in China, asked me for more information about the news.

"If the problem is serious enough, I will leave China for a while. Anyway, my scholar exchange program will come to an end this May," she said.

In order to relieve her anxiety, I said that all the affected people reported a history of "unhealthy sexual encounters" preceding the onset of symptoms. However, not one of the people had tested positive for the HIV virus, and despite these negative results, their AIDS-like symptoms progressed.

As a reporter in the Chinese media, I instinctively avoided using the sometimes sensitive word "homosexual" in my stories. Conservative Chinese authorities are more likely to refer to "bu jie" or



"bu jian kang" sexual encounters — meaning "unhealthy," "unsanitary" or "immoral."

I told her they were engaged in "unhealthy sexual encounters," she smiled wanly and said nothing, leaving as if deep in thought.

I was puzzled by her reaction and added him onto my mental list of quirky expat friends.

The next day, Derrick, our copyeditor, called me to her desk, pointing to the word "unhealthy" on and asking, "So, are

you saying these HIV-negative victims had sex with animals or something?"

"Absolutely not," I answered. "How come? Why do you ask?"

"Unhealthy sexual encounter" is vague and invites people to imagine the worst. There is nothing wrong with being specific if you mean 'homosexual', he explained with a laugh.

Well, I hope Heugh wasn't too freaked out. If she has left China, hopefully she didn't go with the wrong impression.

1. In this May

Professor Zhu Shida (ZSD): In this adverbial phrase, the preposition "in" is unnecessary. It will be perfectly right to say "this May." It is just like adding non-existent feet to a snake in a drawing. I remember I talked about this question in some of the previous columns such as "during last year." We say, this May, last May, this October, last October, this year, last year, all without prepositions. They independently serve as adverbials of time. So small a matter as it is, it counts.

Terry Boyd-Zhang (TBZ): Oh, the prepositions! The most common ones for time are: at, on, by, before, from, since, for, during, to, until and after. Note that "in" is not included. It is true, though, that "(with)in" can denote extended time, including months. As the professor has said, the problem is the "this," and the student should pick one or the other.

2. There are two designs on display. One is Chinese, one is Japanese.

ZSD: Grammatically, it is perfectly right. There is nothing wrong with the sentence. However, rhetorically, it is not perfect, there is something to be desired. We should adopt the pattern of "one is ... and the other is" when we are enumerating two things in succession. This looks more perfect rhetorically and more refined in style. So, with the sample sentence, we should say: There are two designs on display. One is Chinese, the other is Japanese. Similarly, we have the pattern of "some ... some ... and others" when we enumerate more than two groups of people in action. For instance, Some of the students are playing basketball, some are running on the track and others are chasing the ball on the soccer field.

TBZ: To link two ideas together, you should at least use "and." Perhaps you could use "but." Another way for the skilled writer to link two independent but related clauses is to use a semicolon. The semicolon must not be used with another conjunction and can sometimes be used in a list — see theoatmeal.com for a great visual presentation of how to use the semicolon.

3. PBOC exposes officials' money laundering tricks

ZSD: I suggest that, except for internationally accepted ones such as UN, US, etc., we should use initials less in news headlines. Acronyms tend to pose an obstacle for readers, leaving them at a loss as to what is being talked about. This is an example. What is PBOC? An average reader will not know, me for one. "The central bank exposes officials' money laundering tricks" will be easier to understand and simpler for the reader to digest. This is in line with the spirit of journalism, I think.

TBZ: I have a friend who speaks in the lingo of whatever job she is currently working at. Think about it — she uses internal acronyms and internal verbal short-hands which I have no idea about because I work in a different industry. This is the same idea. News headlines should grab the reader's attention by very briefly capturing the main theme of the entire article. If the headline is long, uninteresting or cannot immediately be understood by the reader, they will move on.

4. His new bought iPad

ZSD: There is something wrong with the attributive. The combination of the attributive is adverb-plus-participle with the adverb modifying the past participle. So it should be: his newly bought iPad. Similarly we have: beautifully dressed, well written, the well designed talk show, the beautifully shot film, the masterfully arranged exhibition, the freshly procured land.

TBZ: Here, the native speaker almost fell into error! My tendency — because I love hyphens — would be to throw one in here. Glad I did some research first, because a hyphen can never be used with an "-ly adverb-adjective-noun" construction. However, in many cases, you can use a hyphen to connect two or more words that are all acting as an adjective before a noun. For example: blue-eyed girl or two-year-old child.

Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please send a picture of it to lizhixin@ynet.com together with your name and address.

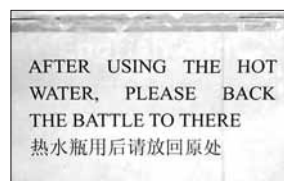
After using the hot water, please back the battle to there

By Terry Boyd-Zhang

In ancient China, there was a famous general named Yue Fei. He lived during the Southern Song Dynasty in the 12th century, the time of the Renaissance in Europe.

When the capital of Kaifeng was attacked by the Jurchens and the emperor of the Southern Song was captured, Yue bravely went to fight the evil Jurchens to have his emperor returned. Tragically, Yue was tricked and killed, but he is remembered for his patriotism and loyalty.

Though he left only fragments of instructions for battle, this sign comes from Yue's memoirs — the English version of how one should retreat. In battle, if dousing your enemies with hot



water does not do the trick, you had better hightail it to the hills, regroup and commence at a new location.

OK, not really. I am making half of the story up. The first character is *re*, or "hot." The second of the most basic characters, *shui*, means "water." The third is *ping* or "bottle." These three

characters together mean hot water bottle, or thermos.

You might get a thermos of hot water for tea, if you stay in a motel. The next two characters are also fairly basic: *yong* means "use" and *hou* means "after." The sixth character, we have seen before, *qing*, or "please." Next is *fang* (put) *hui* (back) *guan* (original) *chu* (place).

So, the confusion of this sign is basically a spelling mistake: "battle" instead of "bottle." All the grammar errors can be excused and perhaps, if the thermos was obvious enough, native speakers would get the basic idea of this sign. It would be a shame to lose Chinglish — think of all the lies you can tell the folks in the old country!



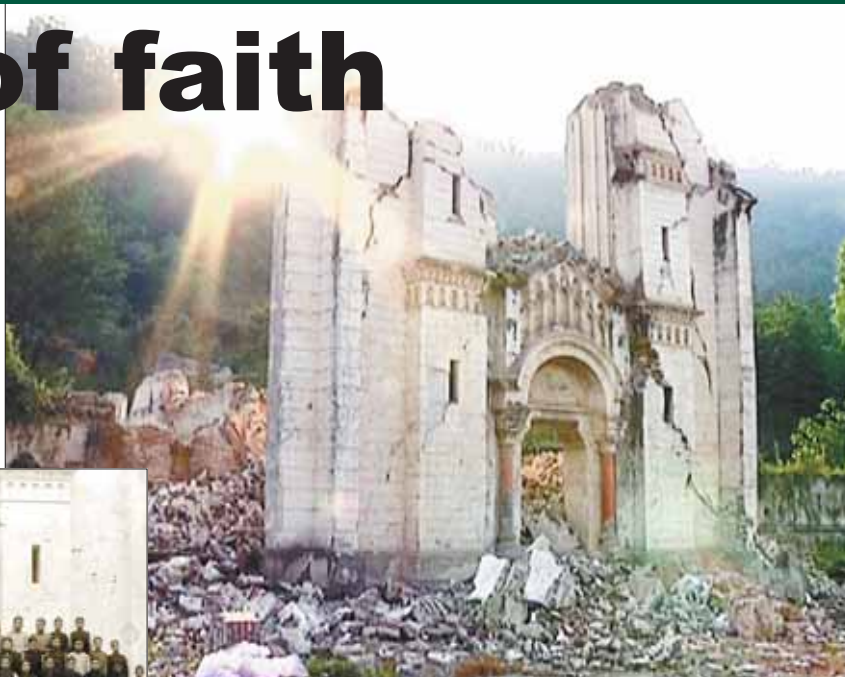
“ A collapsed building is easily rebuilt,
but what about a collapsed spirit? ”

Ruins of faith

Man-made calamity follows horrid disaster

By He Jianwei

The documentary traces the reconstruction of a collapsed French Catholic church in a remote valley in Bailu Town in Sichuan Province, after the Wenchuan earthquake in 2008. But due to economic interest, a murder happens in two families of the valley.



Built by a French missionary, who arrived in Sichuan in 1851, the church collapsed in the Wenchuan earthquake of 2008.

Photos provided by iDOCS



Before the Wenchuan earthquake of 2008, the French Catholic church in Bailu Town was a destination for wedding photographs. Director Zhao Gang was planning to make a romance film about the church.

On May 12, 2008, it became the subject of a documentary when it was shaken to its foundation by the quake.

Completed in 1908, the church was Sichuan Province's oldest. It was built by a French missionary, who arrived in 1851, and local craftsmen, laborers and adherents to the Catholic faith.

Its time as an academy for Chinese missionaries led local farmers to nickname it Shangshu Yuan, a nickname for an Upper Academy. The historical relic was well cared for and preserved by the locals up to its last day.

After the quake, the local government decided to rebuild the church on the site and develop the town into a tourist resort. The government hired farmers to clear the rubble for a pittance.

During the next two seasons, architects from Beijing arrived to help locals protect the site. French culture delegates visited the ruins and gave their opinion about how to best restore the building.

Tang Min and his family, a group of Catholics who have been caretakers of the church for three generations, were employed to guard the ruins night and day against thieves.

Reconstruction was going smooth, but hate and jealousy grew among the community.

Jiang Ming, another Catholic, and his family were jealous of the Tangs because they heard guard duty paid 900

yuan per month. As Jiang lived closer to the ruins, he thought he and his family were better suited to the task.

As the year turned from autumn to winter, the conflict between the families grew ever more bitter.

One day, when the farmers were working on the ruins, Jiang attempted to goad Tang into creating trouble by asking why a peasant from another village was being allowed to work on the site.

The peasant was also an employee and Tang did not

want to pick a quarrel. Accompanied by his wife and daughter, Tang went to Jiang's house in the evening to inform him that caretaker duties would end the next month.

Jiang's grudge finally erupted in violence. He and his father killed Tang's wife and daughter with their knives. Tang fled, but was knocked unconscious and fell from a bridge.

The documentary ends with the funeral of Tang's wife and daughter.

But Zhao said the dark tale

was not something he set out to tell. "This story was out of my control. I had no idea what the film would become when I first went to the village," the director said Monday evening at Talking Point Salon in Jianwai SOHO.

"When I first met Tang and his family, I decided to record the relationship between the family and the church."

It took one year of filming in the village and another year to prepare the final cut. "I'm still not satisfied with the final edition, because I never focused on the lives of Tang's wife and daughter until they were over."

After their death, the director interviewed the villagers to see how they would be remembered.

"In the end, Jiang was sentenced to death and his father to eight years in prison. Tang decided to forgive them their sins," the director said.

